

New federation in USSR keeps bureaucratic rule

BY GREG McCARTAN

The new federation of republics in the old Soviet Union maintains bureaucratic rule over working people in the USSR.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin moved quickly to fashion the new setup following the defeat of the August 19 coup by widespread protests of working people.

Officials of 10 of the 15 republics drew up the plan along with Gorbachev. The pact establishes a powerful central authority made up of top officials from the republics. It also grants greater control over resources to the various wings of the ruling stratum situated in each republic.

This new attempt by the ruling bureaucratic stratum to stabilize the crisis-ridden regime comes as the economy continues to deteriorate and working people resist attacks on their political rights and standard of living.

After only a few days of discussion the Congress of People's Deputies approved Gorbachev's proposal September 5 by a vote of 1,699 to 24. The move effectively dissolved the body. The Soviet president bluntly told the delegates that refashioning the USSR was the only way to prevent the complete disintegration of the country.

Under the agreement the congress deputies will maintain their privileges and legal status until their current term expires in 1994.

Various new governing bodies were established to replace the old. Their makeup reflects the degree to which the centralized police-state regime set up under Joseph Stalin during the counterrevolution against the workers' and peasants' revolution in October 1917 has come apart.

Gorbachev now heads the new highest government body, the State Council. It is made up of officials from each republic and has the power to decide on all domestic and foreign policy issues affecting the "common interests of the republic." It has direct control of the military and security apparatus and foreign affairs.

A powerful Inter-Republic Economic Committee is charged with decision making on the economy and social programs. Its chairman will be appointed by Gorbachev with the agreement of the State Council.

A Supreme Soviet was also set up, consisting of two chambers. The Council of the Republics is to consist of 20 deputies from each republic, chosen from the members of the now-defunct Congress of People's Deputies.

ties and the republics' legislatures. The second chamber, the Council of the Union, will be chosen by the republics' legislatures.

Under the pact each republic can "determine independently the form of its participation" in the central governmental bodies and on economic matters.

Both the makeup of the new bodies and the desire on the part of the republic officials to put the new federation together demonstrated how the ruling stratum has changed the form, but not the content of its bureaucratic stranglehold on political power.

This petty-bourgeois social layer maintains an existence separate and apart from that of the country's working people. While not owning the factories, plants, and other industry, they live off the wealth created by the working class and peasantry. In their standard of living; access to goods, health care, schooling, housing, etc.; and privileged

position of power, they have separate interests than those of the working class. This stratum looks upon workers as a threat, and seeks to defend their position by any means necessary.

Different wings of this caste have competing interests. Those situated in the republics have taken advantage of the weakened central apparatus to push for greater power and access to the resources of each province. None have any interest in advancing the democratic rights of working people or opening the door to explosive struggles for national liberation that would give an impulse to the working-class struggle against the regime.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, got right to the point in an interview with the *New York Times* September 7.

"Common sense and reason say that our idea — of the leaders of the republics and

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Union tops order end to postal strike in Canada

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE
AND ROBERT SIMMS

MONTRÉAL — Dealing a blow to the 13-day Canada-wide walkout by postal workers, Jean-Claude Parrot, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), suspended strike action September 5 after accepting a government proposal for mediation.

Judge Alan Gold had refused to accept the Canadian government's appointment as mediator unless union members returned to work during negotiations with Canada Post. Parrot said the union officialdom agreed to this condition because of the Québec judge's "proven record as a mediator."

"Some workers are disappointed to be back so soon with nothing settled," said CUPW local member Robert Vassileff in Scarborough, near Toronto.

CUPW's 46,000 members participated in what the union calls rotating strikes, beginning August 24. This involved some locals setting up picket lines for a few days and then returning to work while other locals went on strike elsewhere in the country. The

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Strikers waged a real fight on the picket line during 13-day walkout.

Socialists win Iowa disclosure fight

BY RONI McCANN

DES MOINES, Iowa — Working people won a victory for First Amendment rights to privacy and free association September 5 when a state commission voted to exempt Socialist Workers Party candidates from turning over the names and addresses of their financial contributors and recipients.

Reversing an earlier decision, the Iowa Campaign Finance Disclosure Commission voted 3-1 to "exempt the identity of donors and recipients of the Nan Bailey campaign, provided a system is approved by the director for coding in such a fashion that all other information is provided."

The commission had unanimously voted June 19 to reject a request for exemption by the socialist campaign committee. The ruling said the exemption was not warranted because Iowa's municipal elections are "nonpartisan."

SWP General Counsel Edward Copeland, of the New York law firm Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky, and Lieberman, called the September 5 decision "significant." By its action the commission has "recognized the importance of compliance with the constitution of the United States and respect for political rights," he said.

Chris Remple, SWP campaign treasurer, said, "Working people need to be able to discuss and act without fear of victimization."

"Forcing the disclosure of names of Socialist Workers campaign contributors in the Des Moines mayoral race would have a chilling effect on the exercise of these rights."

"Our campaign will use this victory," said Sara Lobman, SWP candidate for mayor of Des Moines. "Myself and my supporters plan to redouble our efforts to make the ideas of our campaign known among working people here."

Lobman, a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 431 and the Young Socialist Alliance, recently stood in for Nan Bailey as mayoral candidate. Supporters of the campaign are petitioning to collect 800 signatures to get Lobman's name on the ballot in the November 3 elections.

'Not above law'

Prior to the commission meeting SWP supporters held a press conference in the lobby of the office building where the session was held featuring SWP campaign treasurer Remple and SWP counsel Copeland. Channel 5 television and KIOA Radio covered the event.

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Wichita rightists blockade clinic

BY GREG ROSENBERG

WICHITA, Kansas — Three hundred rightists blockaded the Wichita Women's Center September 7. Fifty-seven were eventually arrested by police, bringing the total number of rightists arrested here since July 15 to 2,714.

This, the first large-scale assault since August 25, was organized by the Wichita Rescue Movement. Many participants had been recruited during Operation Rescue's month-and-a-half siege of clinics here that provide abortions.

Most of Operation Rescue's leaders and cadre from outside Kansas have now left the

city. The rightists' offensive in the streets did not meet much in the way of countermobilizations by defenders of democratic rights, and was thus able to gain some ground and draw new forces into its ranks.

During the September 7 action Wichita police collaborated with the rightist blockade. The clinic's assistant director Roxanne Meyers said, "We wanted the patients to come in. A police captain was saying, 'No, we can't do that because they [the rightists] will rush the door and we'll be here all day.'"

Police admitted they made a deal with Wichita Rescue Movement director Michael

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Los Angeles event supports parole for jailed Iowa unionist

BY NELSON BLACKSTOCK

LOS ANGELES — Supporters of Mark Curtis gathered at a Sunday afternoon poolside barbecue at the home of Hollywood movie director Nick Castle to rally backing for parole for the imprisoned unionist at an upcoming hearing in Iowa.

The more than 60 in attendance at the August 25 event included garment and oil workers, typical of unionists now joining the fight to free Curtis. A member of the machinist's union at McDonnell Douglas reported on growing support at her plant, as well as at the General Motors plant at Van Nuys.

Teresa Padilla and Antonio Chávez, sister and brother and immigrants from Mexico, brought 5 friends. They said that the revelations concerning injustices inflicted upon Curtis as a result of his support for Latin American immigrants in the meat-packing industry exposed just one example of what many workers face in this country.

A rapt audience watched as Salvador Salas showed the video he took in the Ramona Gardens housing project following the murder of 19-year-old Arturo Jiménez by Los Angeles County deputy sheriffs. The video became a focus of citywide attention after the cops confiscated it and jailed Salas on trumped-up charges.

Nick Castle's video documenting the frame-up of Mark Curtis was also shown.

During an update on the Curtis fight, Castle read from letters well-known members of the Hollywood film industry recently addressed to the Iowa parole board, calling for Curtis' release.

Alejandra Aranovich of Santa Barbara read similar messages from prominent individuals in her area. They include an attorney and criminologist, a college professor, and a radio journalist.

After an appeal for much-needed funds for

the continuing fight, all present assembled for a group portrait to be sent to Curtis in prison.

Among the messages to the Iowa parole board were the following:

- Gary S. Foster: "I write you as a successful film producer in Hollywood asking for the immediate parole of Mark Curtis. You may not be able to overturn the unjust actions of the police and courts, but you can give this innocent man a chance to rejoin the society he rightfully deserves to be a part of."

- Murray Salem: "I am a screenwriter in Hollywood. I recently wrote the Arnold Schwarzenegger comedy 'Kindergarten Cop.'

"I have been following Mark Curtis' case for some years. I believe that it is time for him to finally be released."

- Richard Vane: "I am a motion picture producer. I spent 10 years working at Amblin Entertainment with Steven Spielberg, and worked with him on 'E.T.,' the highest grossing film of all time. I am currently the vice-president of production at Hughes Entertainment, working with John Hughes, who produced 'Home Alone,' the third highest grossing film of all time."

"I have studied the Mark Curtis case, and am shocked that he is still in prison."

"In the name of justice, in the name of humanity, I implore you to free Mark Curtis."

- Craig Safan: "As a composer/filmmaker of many films that not only entertain, but also teach ('Stand and Deliver' . . . etc.), a recipient of four ASCAP awards for my work on 'Cheers,' an Emmy nominee, and a member of the Executive Music Committee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, I feel it is my duty to express my full-hearted support for Mark Curtis and urge you to parole him immediately."

- Jeremy Kagan: "I along with many



Militant/Della Rossa

Fundraiser at Hollywood director's home heard messages backing parole

other film people have become aware of his [the Curtis] case and followed its development. . . . This man's release is overdue, and in the name of justice and compassion I appeal to you to let him go."

- Alan Wertheimer: "I am an attorney in Los Angeles specializing in entertainment industry matters. I represent writers, actors, producers and directors, as well as a number of studio executives. Most of these individ-

uals are politically active, and many of them are keenly aware of Mark's situation. There is widespread support for Mark in the motion picture community and growing concern and outrage over his continued incarceration."

Additional messages to the parole board can be sent to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311. Address all letters to the Iowa State Board of Parole.

Packinghouse workers fight to organize union in Kansas

BY KATHIE FITZGERALD AND PACO SÁNCHEZ

LIBERAL, Kansas — While the battle over abortion and broader democratic rights rages in Wichita, another struggle is being fought in this small southwestern Kansas town.

Here the issue is whether the 1,875 workers at National Beef Packing Co. have the right to safe working conditions and a union.

Over 1,500 workers have signed United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) representation cards and a National Labor Relations Board election will be held September 12–13. National Beef (NBP) is the largest employer in this town of 15,000. Eighty-five percent of the workers in the plant are Latino — mainly Mexican — and 10 percent are Asian, including Laotians, Cambodians and Vietnamese.

The union-organizing drive began in May when a carload of workers from NBP drove to Dodge City, Kansas, to talk to the UFCW. The union drive took on a new dimension when on June 9, three workers cleaning a filter screen on top of a blood tank collapsed and died. According to Ron Kazel, UFCW organizer, the workers in the plant had been working under deplorable safety conditions for years but "this was too much." Large numbers of workers began signing union cards.

Conditions are so bad in the plant, Kazel said, that the turnover rate is 250 workers per month. These workers are part of what has come to be known as the "packinghouse circuit" of workers shuttling between non-union plants in Garden City, Kansas; Grand Island, Kansas; and Lexington, Nebraska.

Recently, two workers who support the union, one with six-years seniority, were fired after they and thirteen others refused to enter

an area of the plant filled with toxic epoxy fumes. That same week an ammonia leak in the plant put four workers in the hospital. When another union supporter attempted to organize the protest against the blatant safety violations he too was fired.

The union has filed unfair labor practice charges on the firings, Kazel said.

Given the severity of the safety violations at the plant, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has been forced to send a team of investigators to Liberal.

Kazel said the company hopes to intimidate its largely immigrant work force. It assumes the workers will not know their rights and will be intimidated with threats of deportation hanging over their heads. "The union doesn't care if a worker is undocumented. A worker is a worker whether or not they have papers," Kazel said. "They deserve the right to vote on representation."

The company has mounted a campaign to counter the union's organizing efforts. It has won backing from the Liberal Chamber of Commerce and a local Catholic priest.

The Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution August 16 opposing the union and organized a series of business and community meetings featuring members of NBP management.

According to the *Southwest Daily Times*, Henry Hildebrandt, a preacher, entered the fray after seeing the union pamphlet, "The Church Speaks On Labor Unions," which quotes several popes and other Catholic leaders. Hildebrandt has given sermons opposing the union, the newspaper reported.

Most workers have not been swayed by these tactics. In a number of interviews they wanted to discuss the conditions in the plant

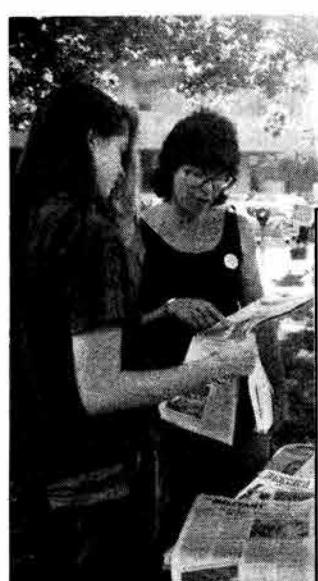
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UMWA ratifies contract at Decker Coal

BY DAVE SALNER
AND PAUL MAILHOT

SHERIDAN, Wyoming — United Mine Workers Local 1972 approved a contract settlement here 153–44 on August 30 after a nearly four-year struggle against industry giants Peter Kiewit Co. and Pacificorp., owners of Decker Coal Co.

The United Mine Workers (UMWA) have been locked in a battle against Decker since 1983 for union recognition and a contract. Local 1972, and Local 2055 at Big Horn Coal, a small mine near Sheridan owned by Kiewit which also ratified a contract, have been important union outposts near the coal-rich but unorganized Powder River Basin and Thunder River Basin. There are at least 14 nonunion coal operations there, one of the largest coal-producing areas in the world.

After miners voted for UMWA representation in 1983 Decker Coal refused to recognize their union or allow union dues to be deducted from their paychecks. It was not until 1986 that the company finally agreed to a one-year contract. When that contract expired, Decker refused to negotiate seriously with the union and forced a strike on Oct. 1, 1987.

Kiewit made it clear from the start that it was out to bust the union. Baker and Associates, a notorious union-busting security firm, was hired months before contract negotiations began in 1987 to harass miners and their families. Some 200 scabs were hired almost immediately to take the place of the strikers.

The union responded with sit-downs in front of the mine entrances to stop the scabs from being herded in. Scores of miners were arrested for "strike misconduct" as the courts and cops sided with Decker in its drive to bust the union. The UMWA locals countered by going out and winning solidarity from the labor movement and from UMWA members, particularly in the West. They also sponsored several rallies attended by unionists throughout Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota.

The company kept the mine running with the 200 scabs. Some 50 members of the UMWA crossed the picket lines.

In June 1988 the union made an unconditional offer to return to work. When Decker refused to take any of the miners back, the union shifted to pursuing unfair labor practice charges against the company.

Did not give up the fight

Although the company was able to run as a scab operation, the UMWA locals did not give up the fight. They received a big boost when the miners at Pittston Coal went out in early 1989, drawing inspiration from that fight in the eastern coal-fields and the massive solidarity it generated from UMWA members. The Decker miners began fanning out to many parts of the country to explain their fight against Decker Coal to the labor move-

ment, picketing company stockholders' meetings and exposing the union-busting campaign of Peter Kiewit Co.

The National Labor Relations Board began to make some rulings in favor of the union in November 1988. Decker was ordered to reinstate some 80 strikers with back pay immediately. The company appealed, although it rehired most of the 80. Of the 153 remaining strikers the NLRB also eventually ruled that 149 had been wrongfully discharged.

Decker miners have kept up their struggle in spite of the intransigence of the company. They have linked their fight and offered their solidarity to nearly every strike and union struggle taking place in the West. Contingents of Decker miners have been at rallies for railroad workers, potash miners, and other coal miners over the past four years. This perseverance, and the many rulings against Decker Coal, have finally forced the company to begin negotiations for the first time in two years and make a contract offer.

According to Larry Deeds, president of UMWA Local 1972, the company's three and a half year contract offer, "shows that if you stick together, even in an isolated part of the country, there's nothing you can't accomplish. If we leave it up to the bosses, the courts, or the government, we lose."

Under the newly ratified contract, the four union members whose cases were not upheld by the NLRB will not be returned to work. They have the option of pursuing their cases or accepting a \$35,000 severance pay buyout with 10 years added to their retirement. The company is also refusing to return 15 others to work. These workers are being offered a \$100,000 severance pay buyout plus the 10 years of added retirement.

In a statement to the Casper *Star-Tribune* Ernie Roybal, financial secretary of the local, said, "If there was any factor that could have defeated this agreement, it was the insistence by Kiewit that some members not be reinstated. Those members are being asked to sacrifice their jobs for the good of the rest of

the membership. The agreement is a clear victory, but not a victory without some sadness."

According to the contract the company also has the option to scrap the agreement if 50 workers, which could include the 19 not being reinstated, do not accept an early retirement package. Those eligible for early retirement include all miners who have at least 5 years of service with the company. They will have about 35 days to decide.

The new contract provides for wage increases for most categories of workers and \$35,000 in back pay for all strikers. It also prohibits Decker from contracting out work while any UMWA member is laid off. The pact measures seniority based on length of service and eliminates Decker's past practice of a point system.

Because of the individual decisions that must be made on whether or not to take early retirement the agreement is not expected to be fully implemented until later in September.

'Militant' announces major staff changes

BY GREG McCARTAN

The *Militant* has announced major staff changes that will both help bring the paper more in tune with the younger generation of workers coming into politics today and at the same time strengthen communist leadership in cities around the United States.

Five new members have joined the staff: Derek Bracey, Estelle DeBates, Martin Koppel, Argiris Malapanis, and Brian Williams.

Over the coming weeks five current staff members will be leaving for other tasks in the revolutionary workers movement.

Of those joining the staff, Bracey, DeBates, and Malapanis are leaders of both the Young Socialist Alliance and the Socialist Workers Party.

Twenty-four-year-old Bracey is the YSA's national organizational secretary. Along with Malapanis he has recently contributed articles to the *Militant* on the World Federation of Democratic Youth conference on the Middle East war, held in Cyprus, and from a reporting trip to Israel and the West Bank. Bracey was part of a three-person reporting team attending the historic national conference of the African National Congress, held in Durban, South Africa, last July.

DeBates, 31 years old, worked in a Chicago machine shop and was a member of the International Association of Machinists. She recently helped lead a *Militant* sales and reporting team in Wichita, Kansas, that got out the truth about the ultrarightists' offensive there aimed at pushing back a woman's right to choose abortion and broader democratic rights. She has been the organizer of the Chicago branch of the SWP for the past two



New 'Militant' staff members. Back row from left: Derek Bracey, Argiris Malapanis, Estelle DeBates. Front row from left: Brian Williams, Martin Koppel.

years and is currently one of the YSA's national cochairpeople.

Prior to working for a time in the party's print shop, Malapanis was the organizer of the Twin Cities branch of the SWP in Minnesota. As a participant in union struggles and protests by working farmers in the Midwest, Malapanis has contributed many articles to the paper. Currently a national co-chairperson of the YSA, Malapanis is 33 years old.

An experienced staff member of *Perspectiva Mundial* and editor of the Spanish-language magazine from 1984–1987, Martin Koppel will also be joining the staff. For the past several years 34-year-old Koppel has resided in Chicago, where he worked at a steel tube mill organized by the United Steelworkers of America.

He recently participated in a tour to Mexico to win support for the fight of framed-up Iowa packinghouse worker Mark Curtis. Koppel returned to Mexico in late July to help promote Pathfinder books by Nelson Mandela and other revolutionary leaders during the ANC president's tour there.

Brian Williams is a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) from Price, Utah. The 39-year-old garment worker has written numerous articles for the paper over the years on labor struggles and developments in the union movement. In the past period Williams has helped to lead the political work of socialists who are members of the ILGWU.

Leaving staff

Leaving the staff are James Harris, Cindy Jaquith, Janet Post, Judy Stranahan, and Peter Thierjung.

Harris, who joined the staff in mid-1990, was previously national organization secretary of the SWP. An activist in the labor movement and the struggle for Black rights for many years, he was the party's candidate for U.S. Senate in New York in 1988 and for mayor of New York City in 1989. Forty-three-year-old Harris will be moving to Detroit to take up activities in the workers movement and help lead the party's work there.

Cindy Jaquith, who has been part of the *Militant* staff for most of the last 20 years, will be taking up responsibilities for leading the party's work in Newark, New Jersey. She was director of the *Militant's* bureau in Nicaragua from 1985–1987, and again in 1990.

Jaquith, 44 years old, has taken on responsibilities as a copy editor since the bureau closed down last December. During that time she has helped train new staff members to continue the tradition of journalistic accuracy and standards for which the *Militant* is known.

Copy editor Janet Post will be moving to Miami to become involved in the labor movement and political activity in that city. Post, 41 years old, joined the *Militant's* business office in mid-1990. As the editorial staff began to take on full responsibility for the business and circulation aspects of the paper Post became a copy editor. She has continued to take responsibility for the extensive work of keeping subscription orders and weekly bundle orders current.

Judy Stranahan, who joined the staff in mid-1990, will be helping to lead the work of socialists in the labor movement in Newark. As a staff writer she covered the battle by Machinists against the union-busting drive by Eastern Airlines. Stranahan is one of the coauthors of the Pathfinder book *The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists*. She took responsibility on the staff for the invoicing and accounts of *Militant* distributors.

Thirty-eight-year-old Peter Thierjung is moving to Cleveland, Ohio, to help build the socialist movement there. Having joined the staff in 1989, he wrote on a wide range of developments in the labor movement, democratic rights fights, and world politics.

He organized the extensive coverage in the paper on the fight of Mark Curtis and the growing worldwide defense effort mounted on behalf of the framed-up unionist who is now serving time in the Iowa prison system. Previously Thierjung was national chairperson of the YSA and edited the *Young Socialist* newspaper.

Farm workers strike in Oregon

BY HARVEY McARTHUR

Farm workers at Kraemer Farms, a large grower in Mount Angel, Oregon, staged a three-day strike in mid-August. The strike was led by the Northwest Tree Planters and the Farmworkers United unions, and is reported to be the first ever by farm workers in Oregon.

The 100 workers demanded to be paid for each bucket of cucumbers they picked and at a rate that would total \$6 an hour. Kraemer was paying the workers 30 percent of the price it received upon selling the cucumbers, so workers' wages varied with the quality of the cucumbers and fluctuations in the market price.

Kraemer Farms' owners first claimed workers were not backing the strike and that the harvest was proceeding as usual. However, on the second day of the strike they met with a union negotiator.

Union president Cipriano Ferrel said the company agreed to the per-bucket wage rate asked by the workers.

Kraemer officials later denied having made an agreement with the union but did announce they would pay the workers 40 percent of the price they received for the cucumbers.

"There's been a pay increase, which is what we were struggling for in the first place," union vice president Ramón Ramírez said.

Meanwhile, the United Farm Workers of Washington State led a protest march of 400 through the city of Yakima, Washington, August 11. This was one of several such actions the union has organized to demand emergency government aid for thousands of unemployed farm workers in the Yakima Valley.

A severe freeze last winter damaged much of the asparagus, cherry, peach, and other crops now being harvested. The big growers are employing far fewer workers than usual this season. The UFWWS conducted a survey of 1,000 farm worker families and found that most were living on less than \$250 a month.

The union is demanding local authorities declare a disaster because of the impact of the freeze. This would make farm workers eligible for special unemployment benefits and other relief.

On August 30, Washington governor Booth Gardner asked President Bush to provide emergency aid for farm workers and growers in three counties affected by the freeze. Gardner included a request for disaster unemployment benefits for migrant workers who were left without jobs. Government officials said up to 80 percent of the 12,000 cherry pickers in Yakima County could not find work in the harvest this year.

Socialists win Iowa disclosure fight

Continued from front page

"We are here today to appeal the Iowa Campaign Finance Disclosure Commission's order to have the Socialist Workers 1991 Campaign turn over the names of its contributors," Remple announced to the press.

"Socialist Workers Campaign Committees have been exempted from turning over names in all previous elections in Iowa and nationally," said Remple, explaining that the exemptions have been based on the fact that supporters of the campaigns are subject to harassment and victimization. "These rights are grounded in the protection of freedom of speech in the Bill of Rights."

One reporter asked SWP Counsel Copeland why the SWP campaign committees should be allowed to operate "above the law" while the Democratic and Republican party candidates must disclose names of their contributors.

"My client is not asking to be placed above the law, rather, we are asking that the commission reverse its earlier decision and place itself within the framework of the constitution and comply with First Amendment rights," Copeland responded.

"The Democratic and Republican parties haven't suffered 40 years of government investigation and disruption; firebombings of their headquarters; bullets shot through the windows of their offices; and threats and victimization of their contributors on the job and even the loss of a job merely because of whom they choose to support in a given election," he said.

It was this history of harassment, Copeland reported, that the Washington Public Disclosure Commission weighed when it ruled just eight days previously to exempt SWP candi-

dates running for office in Seattle from turning over the names of their contributors.

"We believe we are entitled to this protection, we have litigated in the past, and we stand prepared to defend these rights," said the attorney.

Commissioners meet

The ruling was decided at the monthly meeting of the Iowa campaign commission which is open to the public. Four of the five commission members were present along with the commission's legal counsel and other office holders.

Also present was Iowa Civil Liberties Union (ICLU) Legal Director Randall Wilson and an assistant, as well as a dozen supporters of the SWP campaign including long-time immigrant rights fighter Hector Marroquin and Mark Curtis Defense Committee leader Hazel Zimmerman.

SWP Counsel Copeland issued a 20-minute presentation on behalf of the SWP campaign committee. Prior to the meeting the commission members had been furnished with an extensive compilation of previous court decisions including the Federal Election Advisory Opinion of 1990 when the FEC extended for five years a disclosure exemption for SWP state and federal candidates.

Copeland also submitted 40 exhibits that provided considerable documentary evidence of historical and present private and governmental harassment of the SWP and those associating with it.

Commissioners were also furnished with documentation of harassment and victimization in Iowa including the firing of a packinghouse worker and union activist from Nebraska after speaking at a Militant Labor



Militant/Roni McCann

Counsel Edward Copeland tells Iowa press SWP campaign is "entitled to protection."

Forum here. A private investigator for a firm that operates in the state admitted to standing on a garbage bin outside the forum meeting hall and taping the event through an air vent.

Letters urge commission to reconsider

Since the commission's earlier decision, a dozen individuals sent letters asking its members to reconsider. This included Edith Tiger, director of the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee; Gary Tell, a union steward for UFCW Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa; Jim Armstrong, president of United Auto Workers Local 270 in Des Moines; and Jane Magers, a well-known local peace activist.

Copeland read aloud a letter received from Harold Ruggless, vice-president of UAW Local 270 who wrote:

"I have lived in Iowa all of my life and have been proud of our state and its motto: 'Our liberties we prize and our rights we will maintain.' However, during the last year, I have been taught that the price of maintaining my right of freedom of association is high.

"I have been physically attacked, verbally abused, and suffered vandalism to my car for daring to speak with members of the SWP at our plant gate.

"If I decide to contribute to the campaign of Nan Bailey and the contribution were made public, I fear that this type of abuse would be extended to my family. I therefore request that you reconsider your position on disclosure."

'Nonpartisan' elections

Following Copeland's presentation several members raised questions. In refusing to grant SWP candidates an exemption from disclosure earlier, the commission had stated that it had no "application in a nonpartisan city election."

Legal counsel for the commission Lynette Donnor pointed to this again and questioned provisions in a 1989 decision by a U.S. District Court in Florida that granted an exemption to an SWP candidate although the election was nonpartisan.

Copeland said the harassment and endangerment of supporters of SWP election campaigns is real. "It does not turn upon the nicety of whether or not the elections are partisan or nonpartisan."

"Those who react to, are intolerant of, or who might resort to violence against an SWP campaign supporter are not reacting ascetically. It is not simply the name of the party but the ideas the candidates espouse — whether or not the party name is made available or not."

Michael Ray, president of the South Florida National Lawyers Guild, wrote to the commission stating that "as applied to the Socialist Workers Party, the financial disclosure laws are a violation of privacy and the right to association

"A U.S. District Court here in Florida ruled this to be the case in 1989. I urge you to grant the SWP an exemption from the financial disclosure laws."

Donner stated that the commission was "cognizant of the questions involved" and open to working out an agreement that protects both the state's interests and those of contributors and potential contributors to SWP campaigns.

'Private' not public record?

She asked if there was language in the Florida decision or any other that left room for some type of "more extensive" monitoring, perhaps a private record that could be reviewed if necessary yet not made available to the public.

Copeland explained that there was not, and that such a provision would seriously jeopardize the rights of contributors to SWP campaigns given the fact that the harassment documented over past decades is both private and governmental.

After adjourning to an executive session for almost two hours, the commission members announced their decision.

The evening the decision was handed down supporters of the SWP election campaign gathered at the Pathfinder bookstore for a reception attended by SWP Counsel Copeland and others.

"This is a big victory for working people," said SWP candidate Lobman, "and it makes it more possible to campaign and raise political ideas with workers which is exactly what we are going to do more of."

New York transit authority imposes random drug testing on unionists

BY DEREK BRACEY

NEW YORK — The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) announced it will begin random drug testing of Transit Workers Union (TWU) members after a subway accident on August 28. This comes as the motorman, Robert Ray, faces murder charges on the accusation that he was drunk when a train derailed in Manhattan.

The MTA stated August 29 that they will begin random surprise testing of subway crews and bus drivers in response to the accident, in which five people died and more than 200 were injured. Sonny Hall, the president of TWU Local 100, announced the same day that he would not oppose the move.

The union has previously fought MTA attempts to impose testing of its members,

pointing to the ability of the company to use "results" to harass employees. But Hall said that now union members would accept testing "because they don't like being painted the way they're being painted now."

A massive campaign in the big business press has all but convicted Ray. The charge that he was drunk while driving the train is based on a blood test made eight hours after Ray was arrested. Police claim the test indicated a very high level of alcohol in his system. They also say he admitted to drinking before taking the train controls. He has now been charged with five counts of murder.

Pointing to the fact that Ray wasn't arrested until five hours later, Ray's lawyer, Michael Parson, stated that Ray didn't drink before the crash.

Socialist Workers 1991 Party Building Fund

Area	Goal	Paid	% of Total
Atlanta	\$5,500	\$85	2%
Baltimore	3,000	0	0%
Birmingham	5,500	0	0%
Boston	4,100	0	0%
Chicago	8,000	0	0%
Cleveland	3,000	0	0%
Des Moines	3,525	80	2%
Detroit	8,500	900	11%
Greensboro	2,100	0	0%
Houston	4,800	125	3%
Los Angeles	15,000	390	3%
Miami	2,400	54	2%
Morgantown	2,800	0	0%
Newark	9,700	605	6%
New York	16,300	2,358	15%
Omaha	3,000	0	0%
Philadelphia	5,000	0	0%
Pittsburgh	5,500	150	3%
Salt Lake City	6,500	1,135	18%
San Francisco	10,000	495	5%
Seattle	5,000	0	0%
St. Louis	5,500	370	7%
Twin Cities	8,300	0	0%
Washington, D.C.	6,000	100	2%
Other U.S.	4,815	605	13%
International	2,130	200	9%
Total	155,970	7,652	5%
Should be		26,469	18%

I pledge: _____ \$1000 _____ \$500
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 \$_____ Other to the Socialist Workers Party Building Fund.

Send checks or money orders to Socialist Workers 1991 Party Building Fund, 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

Sales off to a good start; increased goals needed

BY RONI McCANN

Supporters of the *Militant* are off to a good start in the nine-week campaign to win 6,200 new readers by November 2. Building on the first week's experiences by getting on a real campaign footing for the rest of the drive is how we can reach each international goal.

Each area should review their goals in light of the first week's results and decide how much they can raise them. We are still short of the 6,200 overall target. Only by setting an aggressive goal, especially for the *Militant*, can we reach out in the most effective way to workers and youth involved in politi-

cal discussions and actions.

As shown by the scoreboard below, the drive is close to being on schedule after the first week. To date, we have signed up 236 new readers to the *Militant*; 41 to *Perspectiva Mundial*; 3 to *L'internationaliste*; and sold 43 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* in 3 languages.

Supporters aim to put the drive on schedule going into the special eight-day target sales week called for September 21-28.

Send subscriptions in!

The sales drive could be further ahead than



'Militant' sales table at Solidarity Day '91 in Washington, D.C., August 31.

"One woman heard about the attacks in Wichita from her mother who lives there and bought a *Militant* to find out more."

Sales to unionists

Next week we will print an international scoreboard with goals taken by socialists who are members of industrial unions. We have national goals from members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU); Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW); United Auto Workers (UAW); United Mine Workers of America (UMWA); United Steelworkers of America (USWA); and United Transportation Union (UTU).

So far, 31 unionists have subscribed to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* including 7 members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and 5 members of the International Union of Electronic Workers (IUE).

We also have goals from unionists in Britain, Sweden, Australia, and New Zealand. Union meatworkers in New Zealand signed up 3 new readers on the job as did union miners in Britain.

Unionists should send goals on sales in industrial unions to the *Militant* by 12:00 midnight, Friday, September 13.

Target week ahead

The drive will get a big boost September 21 when supporters launch a special eight-day sales blitz. In New York supporters are gearing up to take maximum advantage of the effort. On September 7 teams fanned out across the city and sold 9 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 5 to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 4 copies of *New International*.

In Crown Heights, Brooklyn, the scene of a social explosion in the predominantly Black community, supporters sold 2 subscriptions to the *Militant*. Seventeen people gave supporters their names asking them to come back later so they can buy a subscription.

After the first week supporters assessed their experiences and decided to make a shift in their activities in order to place the sales drive more at the center of all of their political work. This week they plan to participate in an action against police brutality, a "sick-out" by city workers, and sell the press at campuses and in working-class neighborhoods.

All out for the target week! On to 6,200 new readers!

Sales Drive Scoreboard

	<i>The Militant</i>			<i>Perspectiva Mundial</i>		<i>New Int'l*</i>		<i>L'inter*</i>		Total	
Areas	Goal	Total Sold	% Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
UNITED STATES											
Miami	86	16	19%	30	5	44	6	5	0	165	27
Los Angeles	160	23	14%	90	6	107	5	3	0	360	34
Seattle	80	11	14%	30	1	27	8	3	0	140	20
Salt Lake City	135	15	11%	24	3	54	2	2	0	215	20
Philadelphia	65	7	11%	20	1	35	2	2	0	122	10
New York	225	21	9%	80	8	110	4	10	0	425	33
Newark, NJ	140	12	9%	50	3	70	2	5	0	265	17
San Francisco	160	13	8%	65	3	72	1	3	0	300	17
Washington, DC	100	8	8%	18	1	55	0	2	0	175	9
Omaha, Neb.	86	6	7%	12	0	25	0	2	0	125	6
Boston	125	7	6%	30	2	53	0	7	0	215	9
Twin Cities, Minn.	145	8	6%	18	2	55	0	2	0	220	10
Detroit	102	4	4%	10	0	30	0	2	0	144	4
Birmingham, Ala.	110	4	4%	5	0	43	0	2	0	160	4
Chicago	163	5	3%	40	0	70	0	2	0	275	5
Atlanta	90	2	2%	12	1	56	0	2	0	160	3
Pittsburgh	95	1	1%	4	0	44	0	2	0	145	1
Baltimore	85	0	0%	12	0	40	0	3	0	140	0
Cleveland	85	0	0%	10	0	25	0	2	0	122	0
Des Moines, Iowa	126	0	0%	17	0	40	0	2	0	185	0
Greensboro, NC	55	0	0%	10	0	14	0	1	0	80	0
Houston	75	0	0%	20	0	30	0	2	0	127	0
Morgantown, WV	80	0	0%	3	0	30	0	2	0	115	0
St. Louis	125	0	0%	8	0	40	0	2	0	175	0
National teams	15	14	93%	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	14
New Haven, Conn.	18	0	0%	2	0	5	0	0	0	25	0
Cincinnati	17	0	0%	2	0	6	0	0	0	25	0
Louisville	6	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
U.S. TOTAL	2,754	177	6%	622	36	1,180	30	70	0	4,626	243
AUSTRALIA	20	3	15%	4	0	25	0	1	0	50	3
BELGIUM	4	0	0%	1	0	7	0	10	0	22	0
BRITAIN											
London	100	7	7%	7	0	70	0	3	0	180	7
Manchester	60	1	2%	3	0	40	0	2	0	105	1
Sheffield	60	5	8%	3	0	40	0	2	0	105	5
Other Britain	10	1	10%	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	1
BRITAIN TOTAL	230	14	6%	13	0	150	0	7	0	400	14
CANADA											
Vancouver	70	9	13%	15	0	30	3	5	0	120	12
Toronto	75	7	9%	15	2	35	3	5	0	130	12
Montréal	65	3	5%	20	0	50	4	30	3	165	10
CANADA TOTAL	210	19	9%	50	2	115	10	40	3	415	34
FRANCE	5	0	0%	5	0	5	0	15	0	30	0
ICELAND	20	0	0%	0	0	4	0	0	0	24	0
NEW ZEALAND											
Auckland	75	10	13%	9	0	25	3	1	0	110	13
Wellington	50	3	6%	3	0	14	0	1	0	68	3
Christchurch	53	3	6%	2	0	12	0	1	0	68	3
Other New Zealand	4	3	75%	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
N. Z. TOTAL	182	19	10%	14	0	51	3	3	0	250	22
PUERTO RICO	2	0	0%	6	0	6	0	0	0	14	0
SWEDEN	45	4	9%	20	3	15	0	3	0	83	7
TOTAL	3,472	236	7%	735	41	1,558	43	149	3	5,914	323
SHOULD BE											
DRIVE GOALS	3,660			800		1,600		140		6,200	

* Single copies of *New International*, *Nueva Internacional*, and *Nouvelle Internationale*; subscriptions to *L'internationaliste*

shown, however, because supporters in 10 cities in the United States and 4 cities in other countries did not send in subscriptions sold this week. Getting the subscriptions and sales reports into the *Militant* by Fridays at midnight is necessary for every *Militant* reader to have an accurate account of the sales effort.

Ahead of schedule

"We did great the first week of the sales drive!" reports *Militant* supporter Becky Ellis from Miami.

Supporters there got out on sales every day beginning with the kick-off weekend: On August 31 four supporters went to Solidarity Day '9

Federation maintains bureaucratic rule

Continued from front page

the President — is the beginning of the consolidation of the Soviet Union," Nazarbayev said hopefully.

Paraphrasing the Kazakhstan official, the *Times* reporter wrote: "He is . . . above all convinced that the Soviet people have first to be convinced of the merits of free enterprise, that letting democracy loose prematurely could be disastrous, especially in the conservative Asian republics."

Reflecting the thinking of his associates Nazarbayev said he believed "it is natural if you raise democracy from above, if you awaken the people. But they must be awakened carefully, so that once awakened they would not take everything apart. This is a real problem for us."

For this official, "they" is working people, and "us" are the ruling layer that is desperately seeking to keep the toilers out of political life and action.

Underlying the regime's crisis is the continued economic decline brought about by decades of bureaucratic mismanagement and administrative direction of the nationalized economy.

A Soviet official quoted by the Tass news agency said that the country "needs immediate delivery of food," including "grain, fodder, meat, dairy products, sugar," and other necessities. "If there is any delay," he said, "famine could start."

Such products were less available in government-run stores in August than they were in June, a survey by a Soviet weekly magazine found, and in other stores prices rose an average of 17.3 percent.

Inflation now stands at 100 percent a year, and the Soviet mint is printing money at four times the rate in 1987. The head of the central bank said the amount of money in circulation by the end of the year would reach 240 billion rubles, up from 136 billion in January.

"Galloping inflation will come sooner or later," Gorbachev's budget advisor told the *Times*. "I expect it before the end of the year. It's inevitable."

Both Gorbachev and Yeltsin addressed the problems concerning working people's availability of food in a September 6 "Town Meeting" program on ABC News. Moderated by Peter Jennings, the pair was asked questions by audiences in various U.S. cities.

Jennings, thinking he misunderstood Yeltsin's answer to a previous question, asked the Russian president if he meant his statement that the Russian republic would "take care of itself and that the other republics will have to take care of themselves" in the case of serious food shortages during the coming winter.

"You have correctly understood me," Yeltsin replied.

Gorbachev, on the other hand, emphasized the need for "cooperation with regard to food



The Soviet Union and its republics. The Soviet government recognized Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia as independent states September 6.

and medicines" and developing "a reliable mechanism for supplying these foodstuffs to consumers."

Gorbachev also responded to a question by Jennings on whether the Soviet regime would continue its economic relations with Cuba.

Trade with Cuba is "acquiring, I would say, a character of which is mutual benefit in an economic sense. We are taking that which we need — sugar, ferrous metals, citrus fruits, that's what we need," he said.

"And in turn, we provide those materials, those raw materials included, which are necessary to Cuba." The Soviet presi-

dent said they "don't intend to alter our relations in any different direction."

But both Gorbachev and Yeltsin made it clear that relations with Cuba are not based on support for the people of that country's struggle for socialism.

The two were questioned about their views on socialism "considering the dismal history of Soviet communism."

Following the coup, Gorbachev moved rapidly to distance himself from two institutions that for decades have been the bureaucracy's pillars of rule: the Communist Party (CP) and the KGB.

On August 29 the Soviet parliament voted to suspend all activities of the CP and a purge of the KGB was begun. Because it is not a political party but part of the repressive apparatus, the CP has justly earned the hatred of working people in the Soviet Union.

For years the Soviet ruling stratum tried to portray the CP and its policies as advancing the interests of working people, both at home and abroad. But the bureaucracy has now dropped all pretensions of being communist or that it is advancing the fight for world socialism.

"I think this experiment which was conducted on our soil was a tragedy for our people," Yeltsin said on the ABC program. He suggested the "experiment" should have "been conducted in some small country," to make it "clear that it was a utopian idea."

Gorbachev added that "the model has failed which was brought about in our country. And I believe this is the lesson not only for our people but for all peoples."

But the "model" that is coming unglued is that erected over the past decades by the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, not that of the struggle by working people for socialism begun in 1917. Based on violently driving working people out of political power, the model of the ruling caste has indeed shown its disastrous consequences for working people.

Some facts on the Soviet republics' economies

BY GEORGE BUCHANAN

Declarations of independence by ruling groups in the great majority of the Soviet Union's 15 republics do not mean that these forces are moving in the direction of establishing either separate states or greater space for democratic rights than existed under the rule of the Communist Party (CP).

The central leaders of these regimes now make up the new State Council. The close interdependence of the republics' economies is reflected in the makeup of the new economic council, in which even the three Baltic states are involved.

Most of these republics continue to be ruled by the same Stalinist rulers who have only recently discarded their lifelong adherence to the CP.

One such case is the regime in Azerbaijan, led by Ayaz Mutalibov. Before the recent coup crumbled, his government indicated support for it, but made a rapid turn within days. Mutalibov stepped down as CP general secretary in Azerbaijan and announced that he was a "genuine anti-Communist" and had been a "secret Muslim."

On September 8 Mutalibov was elected unopposed as Azerbaijani president. Opposition groups boycotted the poll, charging that Mutalibov's forces had rigged it.

In another republic that has declared independence — Georgia — demonstrators protested against the ruling group's recent banning of the most critical opposition newspapers. The Georgian regime, headed by President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, has also cracked

down on Ossetians in Georgia who wish to separate from the republic.

The extreme economic interdependence of the republics is underscored by the fact that 9 of the 15 send 60 percent or more of their output to other Soviet republics. Heavy industry is concentrated in two regions of the Russian republic and the Donets Basin in the Ukraine.

While the Baltics produce no steel and little energy, they make 20 percent of all the Soviet Union's consumer goods. Kazakhstan, on the other hand, is a supplier of wheat and natural resources to the rest of the Soviet Union.

Close economic interdependence has not meant an equalization of living standards throughout the Soviet Union. For example, more than half the households in the central Asian republics of Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Tadzhikistan, and Kirghizia still survive on less than 100 rubles a month — compared with 8 percent of the households in Estonia. This income gap has widened over the past two decades.

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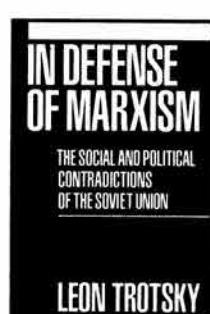


In Defense of Marxism

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTRADICTIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION

Leon Trotsky

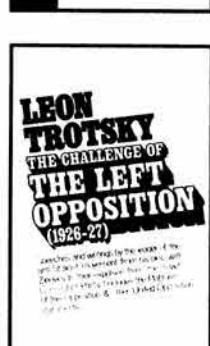
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Continued from front page

Downs. "There were some agreements made that no [patients] would be allowed inside until we got all those people arrested," police Capt. Gary Johnson said. In our opinion, to avoid confrontation, it was the best thing to do."

Rightists picked the Women's Center so as to avoid an injunction in force at two other clinics, including Dr. George Tiller's Women's Health Care Services. Tiller's clinic was the scene of many of the rightist mobilizations.

U.S. District Judge Patrick Kelly offered to lift the injunction during a hearing September 5. His deal was characterized as a "compromise" to "cool tensions" by the local press.

Kelly proposed limiting the number of rightists to five at a time, with three additional people being allowed to enter the clinic driveway. When clinic employees or patients attempted to drive in, the rightists would be given 15 seconds to talk to the person and give them literature. A neutral "third party" would be allowed to "inspect" the clinic and "report to the community."

This open invitation to harassment by rightist thugs was rejected by Tiller. John Cowles, Tiller's attorney, said at the hearing, "We're not in a position to give away our patient's rights. There shouldn't be one second of physical interference in that driveway, much less 15."

Kelly also lifted his order barring Operation Rescue leader Randall Terry from the city in order for Terry to attend the hearing

and appear on the Donahue show being taped here. Following the hearing Terry called Tiller "a murderer. When abortion is made illegal again, that man is going to be looking at some hard time."

Tiller has taken to wearing a bulletproof vest since rightists threatened his life and those of his family.

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Imperialists divide over loans to Soviets

German, French governments back massive aid; Washington says not now

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The August 19 coup in the Soviet Union highlighted the depth of the crisis of the Stalinist regime there and sharpened divisions between the imperialist powers over whether to extend massive loans and aid to Moscow.

In the aftermath of the coup the governments of Germany and France have renewed calls for massive aid to the Soviet Union. Washington, London, and Tokyo, on the other hand, continue to argue that financial aid will accomplish nothing until Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's regime takes steps to integrate the Soviet economy into that of world capitalism.

Both Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin have stated their desire to take the Soviet economy along this path. But both the Soviet regime and the imperialist powers it looks to know that to do so means a wholesale assault on the standard of living and rights of working people. The massive outpouring in the streets that defeated the coup is the latest indication of the kind of resistance the Soviet regime faces in carrying out such a plan.

Differences over the pace and extent of loans to the USSR were first debated only weeks ago at the Group of Seven (G-7) meeting in London. The G-7 is made up of the world's seven strongest imperialist powers: the United States, Japan, Britain, Canada,

France, Germany, and Italy.

"Whoever wants to support change and guard against danger must now help more and more quickly than before," Germany's Economics Minister Jürgen Möller said after the coup's failure. Germany is the Soviet Union's largest lender, having paid or pledged \$35 billion in credits since 1989. On the day Gorbachev was ousted, the Frankfurt stock market fell 9.5 percent, more than any other major stock exchange, registering fears of even greater social instability in the USSR and even dimmer prospects of repayment of loans.

"Germany's economy, also burdened with the high costs of German unification, can no longer support such massive outlays as those made to the USSR," explained the *New York Times*.

Although initially hailed by many as a gigantic boon to German capitalism, the attempt to integrate the workers' state in the east into a united Germany has turned out to be an enormous financial burden — to the tune of nearly \$100 billion this year and an estimated \$1 trillion in the 1990s.

In a statement to Germany's parliament September 4, Chancellor Helmut Kohl said that, as chairman of the G-7 beginning next January, he would demand greater financial aid for the Soviet Union from the United States and Japan.

"Mr. Kohl said Germany's partners and



German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (left) and U.S. President George Bush. Germany is Soviet Union's largest lender, having pledged \$35 billion in credits since 1989.

Cuba: We won't abandon fight for socialism

BY SETH GALINSKY

"Whatever happens in the USSR," *Granma* wrote in a front page editorial August 29, Cuba will not turn away from the road of "national independence, anti-imperialism, Latin Americanism," and the fight for a socialist society. *Granma* is the official newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Answering those who argue that the coup attempt and its defeat are additional proof that socialism has no future, the editorial stated that "the only thing that has no prospects would be a country without independence, revolution, and socialism."

The daily paper noted that during the last year, trade with the Soviet Union — Cuba's main trading partner — had declined and become irregular. Oil imports from the Soviet Union had dropped 30 percent. The trade disruption has caused shortages of milk, rice, beans, and other basic necessities. These severe economic difficulties come on top of those caused by the 30-year U.S. embargo of Cuba.

Washington has been pressing the Soviet Union to cut trade to Cuba entirely. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. President George Bush said August 26 that Cuban President Fidel Castro "must be sweating." Referring to Boris Yeltsin, Bush said, "Here's a man who in things like cutting off aid to Cuba . . . stand[s] with us on a lot of these questions."

As a result of the events surrounding the coup, "in the short and medium run the difficulties that we have been facing could get much worse, just as we had foreseen since the middle of last year," the *Granma* editorial said.

In spite of the problems, *Granma* stated, Cuba will continue with "rectification, the raising of the efficiency of economic and productive management . . . and the perfecting of our socialist democracy." Rectification refers to the political course begun in Cuba in 1986 to overcome problems that grew out of widespread use of bureaucratic methods of economic planning and administration in the mid 1970s. Rectification seeks to increase the participation, consciousness, and confidence of working people in the running of society.

Black and bitter moments'

"It is impossible to deny how black and bitter are these moments," *Granma* said.

The position of "politicians who favor privatization and the most accelerated transition to the hegemony of the market," the Cuban paper added, "has been strengthened with the development of events."

Nonetheless, Cuba is willing to maintain trade relations with the republics, individual companies that are formed, and whatever government is in power in the Soviet Union, the editorial said.

Granma cautioned those who "are rushing to write the epitaph of the communist ideal" because they are "underestimating . . . our capacity for resistance."

The Cuban people closely followed the events surrounding the coup attempt. Factual accounts of new developments were broadcast on the radio and television and printed in the daily papers. Television coverage included scenes of workers taking to the streets of Moscow to protest the coup. *Granma* published major excerpts from Mikhail Gorbachev's press conference after the coup's

allies should do more to help the Soviet Union financially because it was in their interest that the troubled union remain stable," the Associated Press reported from Bonn September 4.

The Italian government has joined Germany and France in the renewed calls for aid to the Soviet Union, announcing it would propose at the October meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, that the IMF accept the USSR as a full member and put in place a special aid program. Washington has kept the Soviets out of the IMF so far.

Commercial banks in imperialist Germany and France have already loaned more than \$27 billion to the Soviet Union. In contrast, loans from commercial banks in the United States add up to only \$500 million.

Half of the Soviet Union's \$40 billion in commercial debt comes due within a year. Because most of these funds are owed to German and French capitalists, Washington and Tokyo have little interest in seeing new loans simply recycled in Moscow to pay off their competitors.

Washington rebuffs aid proposals

President Bush has held to Washington's stance of opposition to any funds to bail out Gorbachev and Yeltsin. The September 9 *Time* magazine said that "Bush, with support from Britain, Canada, and Japan, continues to insist that large-scale aid for the Soviets be withheld until he sees significant new economic reforms, including steps aimed at the creation of a free market."

Announcing an upcoming trip to Moscow, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said September 4 that he plans to press Soviet leaders for the "rapid development of a new, comprehensive economic adjustment and reform plan in close consultation with the IMF, the World Bank, and other international economic institutions." This, Baker added, "is the critical next step."

During a trip to Moscow September 1, British Prime Minister John Major agreed that the time was still not right for vast infusions of aid.

While all wings of the U.S. ruling class agree that massive loans would do little to stabilize the crisis-ridden regime in Moscow, some believe Washington should loosen the purse strings at least a little. Following the defeat of the coup, Les Aspin, chairman of

defeat, without comment.

Contrary to statements by some U.S. government officials, the Cuban government did not issue a statement in support of the coup. In a statement released August 20 — in the midst of the coup — the Cuban government said it was not up to it "to judge the events that are taking place in the Soviet Union."

the House Armed Services Committee in the U.S. Congress, proposed diverting \$1 billion from the defense budget in order to provide assistance to Moscow.

Washington and London, like other imperialist powers, share the Soviet rulers' fear of "instability" arising out of the recent events. They fasten particular hopes on Gorbachev's ability to lead the way forward. While giving diplomatic recognition to the three Baltic states September 2, Bush has not done the same for any other republic.

This approach is shared by others in the U.S. ruling class. A September 5 *New York Times* editorial titled "Toward a Soviet Re-Union" stated: "The collapse of the centrally controlled Soviet Union leaves a frightening void. It's no wonder that Soviet leaders are struggling to create a new confederation that decentralizes power but retains elements of unified control."

Japanese government stance

The Japanese government has mounted the stiffest opposition to an aid package for the Soviet Union. Japan is seeking to pressure Moscow to return four islands seized at the end of World War II.

"Japan wants to avoid a situation where NATO writes a prescription for how it wants to deal with the situation and Japan just gets a bill later," said Yukio Okamoto, a former senior foreign ministry official who was involved in Japan's response to the U.S.-led war against Iraq.

The proposals for massive aid to the Soviet Union or demands for its rapid integration into the capitalist market are pragmatic responses by different imperialist powers seeking to stem the crisis of the Soviet regime.

Far from being a boon to the imperialist economies, this crisis threatens to place new economic pressure and strains on the world capitalist system and has sharpened divisions among different imperialist powers.

These facts help show why the imperialist ruling classes in the United States, Europe, and Japan did not emerge as the victors from the Cold War. The disintegration of the Stalinist Communist Party and the weakening of the bureaucratic regime mean that imperialism can no longer hope its main agent of counterrevolution in the USSR — the privileged social layer and its police-state apparatus — can keep working people there in a political deep freeze. Now the imperialists must take on the Soviet workers directly.

The imperialists have no prospect of restoring stable capitalism, or even reasonable social equilibrium, in the Soviet Union without a fight against working people — a fight whose consequences they cannot foresee.

Through the massive resistance that led to the toppling of the coup, working people in the Soviet Union have gained more space and greater confidence for the struggles to come. This is what both Washington and Bonn fear.

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Document by Castro at Mexico summit details impact of world capitalist crisis

BY LUIS MADRID

Latin America's foreign debt nearly doubled over the last decade "in spite of the fact that we sent abroad an amount 64 percent larger than the debt we had in 1980," wrote Cuban President Fidel Castro in a document addressed to the 23 heads of state and government attending the First Ibero-American Summit held July 18-19 in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Initiated by Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the summit was the first time heads of government of Latin America gathered "without having been convoked by the United States," Castro noted. Washington was not invited. Participants came from the Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America and from Portugal and Spain, but not from English or French-speaking countries in the region.

During the opening session of the event Castro, like the other leaders present, was allocated a speaking time of seven-minutes. A 41-page written document by the Cuban president was also presented to all the delegations. It was published in the July 23 issue of *Granma*, the daily newspaper of the Communist Party of Cuba.

Latin America currently faces "its worst economic and social crisis of this century," Castro explained, adding that this crisis has developed independently of the periodic business cycles in the largest imperialist countries. "What has occurred in the 1980s — known as the lost decade — has not been simply a pause in development, but rather a grave and profound transformation in an unfavorable direction," he said.

Latin America's per capita production was the same in 1990 as it was in 1977. A study recently released by the United Nations Development Programme indicated that of the region's 447 million inhabitants, 270 million live under conditions of extreme poverty.

Castro emphasized that the net outflow of capital from Latin America is a result of the capitalist international financial set up. During the last decade \$365.9 billion was sent to banks and agencies in New York, London, Tokyo, and other imperialist centers to pay off and service the debt. Despite this massive tribute poured into the imperialist coffers the debt rose from \$222.5 billion in 1980 to \$423 billion in 1990.

Human toll

Contrasting social conditions in the industrialized nations with those in the semi-colonial world, Castro addressed the human toll that has come along with the debt crisis.

According to Castro, in Latin America "one million children under five years old die each year" due to preventable diseases. The average life expectancy in the entire region does not go beyond 68 years, 7 years less than the average in the developed countries. The infant mortality rate — for children under one year old — is 55

per 1,000 live births. This figure is six times as high as that of the industrialized capitalist nations, Castro said.

In contrast, Cuba's infant mortality rate went from 16.5 to 10.7 per 1,000 from 1985 to 1990; life expectancy there reached almost 76 years.

The deterioration of Latin America's social conditions goes hand in hand with attempts by governments in the region to squeeze the countries' resources, hoping to meet debt payment commitments. Other, more fundamental problems of underdevelopment help compound the problem. Such is the case of inadequate supplies of drinking water. This has been vividly exemplified by the first cholera outbreak in the Americas in this century. By mid-year, in Peru alone, there were 175,000 victims of this epidemic, and more than 1,200 had died.

The current situation, the Cuban leader pointed out, "discredits and wears out any government, no matter how noble its intentions — and no matter how much popular support the renewed hope of the peoples has managed to grant it in spite of constant disappointments."

Castro underlined the incapacity of the governments of the region to unite in a common debtors front in the mid-1980s, when imperialist banks and financial institutions were in a much weaker position. "That unique opportunity to begin solving our essential economic problems was lost," he said.

The "neoliberal policies" applied for several years in the region, promoted by many leftist and social democratic forces as a way to fight the crisis, have proven bankrupt, the Cuban president pointed out. Inflation, which in 1982 stood at 56.1 percent, reached "the almost unbelievable average of 1,500 percent" in 1990.

Castro argued that Washington's Enterprise for the Americas plan could not provide relief from the crisis facing the region. The plan would grant a debt reduction of \$7 billion — less than 2 percent of the total debt — and a yearly capital investment fund of \$300 million for five years. Washington would only commit itself to contribute \$100 million toward the fund.

Castro denounced the plan's objective of turning Latin America into a large free-trade zone for the benefit of U.S. imperialism. The financial benefits for semicolonial countries were illusory, he said. "Every three days Latin America remits abroad that amount [\$100 million] in interest, debt payments, and profits to foreign capital."

Interimperialist competition

Referring to the U.S. government initiative, Castro explained the growing economic problems faced by U.S. imperialism.

The U.S. trade deficit reached \$101 billion in 1990 and its commercial position "in relation to its competitors in Europe and Japan is that of a power that is losing



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Cuban President Fidel Castro. U.S. imperialism "in relation to its competitors in Europe and Japan is a power that is losing ground," he said in statement to summit.

ground and fighting to reverse its decline," he said. The Enterprise for the Americas plan has to be seen within this context, Castro remarked. It is "dictated by necessity, not by generosity."

The U.S. imperialists present themselves "as a great power that has accentuated its military hegemony," Castro said. But "the grave internal problems its economy faces" must be noted.

"With a falling rate of profit" and "a dangerous domestic and foreign debt," the U.S. imperialists "need to halt the deterioration" of their weakened power in the arena of international economic competition, Castro observed.

At the same time, the Cuban president said, "the powers that were defeated in World War II emerge as poles of economic concentration and strength that challenge U.S. supremacy."

Castro warned that at the same time as a new set of relations may be put together among the major imperialist powers and the Soviet Union, "brutal interventions can also take place, such as the invasion of a small state like Panama." Condemning the U.S.-led war against Iraq, he said the aggression "turned the region into a gigantic firing range, strengthening its [the U.S.] position in preparation for future economic and strategic rivalries."

"The new world order," the Cuban president said, "could end up being worse than the previous one: a unipolar world in which the ending of antagonism between the blocks — hailed by some as the end of ideologies and the triumph of universal values — results in the wiping out of the socialist community." Meanwhile, the system of political and economic imperialist relations continues to subjugate the semi-colonial world.

Castro took up in this context the decision by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to create a rapid-reaction force capable of responding to "potential threats," including outside of the confines of NATO countries. The NATO force of up to some 60,000 soldiers will be British-led and count on Washington for troop transportation and combat air support. NATO's creation had been predicated on supposedly stopping an attack through central Europe by the Soviet Union and the Eastern European members of the Warsaw Pact. The pact, however, formally disbanded July 1.

"It is worth asking," Castro wrote, "where could such a threat come from? . . . Who is the enemy conceived of by the NATO planners at this point, either in the European theater or outside of it, that the rapid-reaction forces will be used against? Would they remain impulsive and respectful of the sovereign right of every people to seek the social regime that corresponds to their interests, their experience, and the will of the majority?"

Cuban economic and social development

The Ibero-American summit provided the Cuban leader with an important platform to explain the example of and the challenges before the Cuban revolution.

In spite of a 30-year economic blockade imposed by Washington, Cuba's planned economy, state ownership of the means of production, and state control over foreign trade have made possible the social and economic strides taken by the Cuban people.

The blockade has meant that "we have been deprived of resources worth more than \$15 billion" over the last 30 years, Castro said.

In addition, the collapse of the Eastern European regimes and the accelerated crisis of the regime in the Soviet Union — with which Cuba maintained more than 75 percent of its foreign trade — have also hurt the island's accessibility to badly needed resources such as oil, food items, and other goods.

Responding to the difficulties faced by the country, the Cuban leadership has been implementing an emergency program known as the "special period" for nearly a year. Unlike International Monetary Fund-type measures imposed on peoples of the Third World with the sole purpose of guaranteeing foreign debt payments, Castro explained, the measures adopted by the Cuban government seek to "adequately protect all of the citizens" and "equitably spread the impact of the shortages," paying particular attention to the needs of those with the lowest incomes as well as children and the elderly.

Cuba's National Assembly adopted a major food program last December to increase the availability of produce in the cities. The program relies on the mobilization of volunteer work brigades and contingents to meet the shortage of labor in agriculture.

In addition to the food program, Cuba is trying to expand its hard currency earnings by developing tourism and the medical and biotechnological industries.

Castro addressed recent attacks by some wings in the U.S. government on Cuba's nuclear power program.

The shortage of energy resources capable of guaranteeing a sustained growth led Cuba to launch a nuclear power program with assistance from the Soviet Union more than a decade ago. Along with maintaining the economic blockade, Washington seeks to pressure Cuba into stopping its nuclear program as an energy resource.

Last June, U.S. Senator Connie Mack asked the administration of George Bush to press the Soviet Union to withhold supplies needed to complete the Juragua nuclear power complex. One argument advanced by Mack and others is that a nuclear accident could easily occur at the complex because of inadequately prepared personnel.

"Cuba's position has clearly been to cooperate with those who in good faith have requested information on the safety of the installations," Castro explained to the Ibero-American heads of state. U.S. inspectors, for instance, toured the complex in 1989. Experts from the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency have also visited the

Continued on Page 9

CUBA: Challenges facing the revolution in a changing world

Hear: Mary-Alice Waters

Editor of *New International*, recently returned from three weeks in Cuba.

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ANC rejects regime's plans for parliament

BY GREG McCARTAN

Proposals for a new constitution put forward September 4 by the ruling National Party in South Africa were quickly rejected by the African National Congress.

"The National Party proposals are a recipe for disaster, designed to deny a future South African government the power to truly liberate the country from the misery that apartheid has wrought," ANC President Nelson Mandela said in a statement in Johannesburg.

South Africa President F.W. de Klerk announced his proposals for the character of the parliamentary structure, based on universal suffrage, at a special convention of the National Party in Bloemfontein.

Under the plan, an integrated two-chamber parliament would be open to all South Africans. The seats in one house would be allocated according to the number of votes a party receives across the country. The other chamber, made up of representatives of parties from nine newly constituted regions, would have the power to veto legislation adopted by the lower house.

De Klerk also proposed eliminating the position of the president, replacing it with an executive committee of three to five members drawn from political organizations. In addition, a multiparty Cabinet would be selected from among parties with proven political support.

With his proposals warmly welcomed by the National Party delegates, de Klerk said the plan "does not mean apartheid in another guise, but merely what it says — full rights for the majority, but not the ability to trample down or destroy the rights and values of others; a vote for all, but not the right to dominate or oppress."

Under apartheid, extended and consolidated under the National Party government in Pretoria after it came to power in the late 1940s, only those designated as "white" by the regime have full voting rights. The current parliament is made up of three chambers: two lower houses — one reserved for "Coloureds" and one for "Asians" — and a dominant chamber reserved for whites.

Faced with a rising rebellion inside the country and setbacks in its expansionist wars in southern Africa over the past decade, the regime has been forced into an historic retreat. The government is now taking pains to portray itself as the best hope for bringing economic prosperity to the country, including its impoverished Black working class and peasantry.

De Klerk's current initiative seeks to slow the drive on the part of the ANC to mount a campaign calling for the convening of a constituent assembly, a further step in the fight for the creation of a nonracial, democratic South African republic.

So far, the regime has refused to hand over power to any transitional body. It is instead pressing to win support for its proposal, hoping the fact that it recognizes that all will have the right to vote is enough to thwart the revolutionary struggle led by the ANC.

The ANC statement contrasted their own

publication and distribution of a "Constitutional Proposals" document and a "Bill of Rights for a New South Africa" with the National Party making only a sketchy outline of de Klerk's proposals available through the press. "This is a debate that should be open so as to enable the people of this country not only to know what is happening but also to participate in the process," the statement says.

'Effective minority veto'

Creating a weak parliament and executive branch, "hamstrung by arrangements requiring broad consensus amongst small interest groups," the ANC said, is "an attempt to disguise an effective minority veto, designed to prevent effective government by a majority party."

Because the proposals block a majority party from exercising control of the legislative and executive branches of government, the National Party plan ensures "that whites retain the accumulated privileges of apartheid under the guise of constitutional principle," the statement reads.

In addition, the new regions, all with equal representation in one of the chambers of parliament, would be arranged to give extra weight to areas inhabited largely by whites. Until this past June all but 13.7 percent of the land area in the country was reserved for whites.

The ANC statement also singled out the relatively greater powers given to the governments in the "autonomous regions." "This is not participatory democracy, but a ploy to strip the central parliament of essential powers," the statement said. "Disparities between rich and poor regions will be entrenched, and the devise will prevent national reconstruction."

While reports in the big-business media gave few details on the regime's plan, the ANC statement welcomed the part of the proposal that said municipal boundaries would be redrawn to "ensure nonracial local government with one administration and one tax base."

As part of the strict segregation enforced by the apartheid regime, Blacks lived in miserable conditions in townships surrounding the "whites only" cities. Many local demonstrations the past several years have called for an end to this division and the joining of the cities with the townships.

But the ANC statement said that other National Party proposals "negate this process by entrenching existing residential patterns and favouring property owners." This involves the government's plan to set up "neighborhood committees" that could set regulations and handle security matters for areas in each city.

Reaffirming its commitment to fight to protect the rights of all "South African citizens, regardless of colour, creed or gender," the ANC concluded that a "constitutional artifice that compels consensus in the executive arm of government and that thwarts democracy is unworkable."



Militant/Greg McCartan
Soweto protest last year demands end to separate governments in townships and cities

Document by Castro details impact of world capitalist economic crisis

Continued from Page 8

Juragua plant, and have verified the construction procedures as keeping with the most rigorous current international guidelines, Castro said. The plant is not expected to begin operating until early 1993. At the Ibero-American summit the Cuban president encouraged the development of inspection programs on the basis of reciprocity, including inspection of nuclear installations in the United States.

Castro contrasted the hostile and aggressive policies displayed by successive U.S. administrations to Cuba's willingness to have a dialogue and work toward the solution of differences on the basis of principles and mutual respect.

In a speech broadcast to Cuba on May 20, U.S. President Bush asked Castro to hold "free elections" and to "free all political prisoners in Cuba." Bush added, "We can expect relations between our countries to improve significantly" if Cuba followed his orders.

"Our democracy," the Cuban president wrote in his message to the summit, "was conquered on the basis of national unity, social property, and people's participation" in the most important decisions of the country.

"Cuba will never make concessions in its political system as a result of pressure, threats, or dictates," Castro added. In regard to the question of political prisoners and human rights the Cuban leader underlined, "no other state has favored people as Cuba has. . . . The right to work, education, culture, health care, security, in short, the right to a dignified life" are guaranteed for all.

In Latin America "you can not talk about democracy and participation to those who entirely lack the most basic rights, and for whom equality is nothing but a shallow and abstract concept," Castro said.

Latin American integration

The perspective of Latin American economic integration in the face of the capitalist economic crisis permeated the speeches given at the summit as well as the discussions that took place during the two-day gathering.

"The peoples of our America have before them," Castro stated, "the grand task of forging the Latin American and Caribbean community, as an unavoidable prerequisite for their definitive freedom, their complete and genuine development, and their very own survival."

Cuba will help in the progress toward better economic relations by paying the debts it owes to a number of countries in Latin America, Castro indicated, thanking at the same time creditors in those countries willing to look for reasonable payment solutions.

In the course of the summit it was announced that Chile, Colombia, and Paraguay were reestablishing consular and trade relations with Cuba.

The Guadalajara summit, Castro said,

is a "first step toward greater unity, broad and effective collaboration and, in due time, needed economic and political integration."

He pointed out, however, that such an endeavor will not be complete "as long as the representative of an independent Puerto Rico does not sit with us, or we leave outside of the domain of our meeting millions of men and women from the Caribbean who are not only brothers and sisters with whom we share geography, economic underdevelopment, and culture, but also our cofighters in the tasks we are setting ourselves."

London march to demand justice for Tottenham 3

BY MARTIN MARRIOTT

LONDON — "The march will send a clear message to the government, judges, and police that the Tottenham 3 are innocent and must be released from prison immediately," said Shaun Waterman, secretary of the Tottenham 3 Families Campaign, urging backing for the upcoming "Justice March."

Three youth from Tottenham, North London — Winston Silcott, Engin Raghip, and Mark Braithwaite — were framed up by the police in response to a street rebellion in 1985. The protests were in response to the death of a local Black woman, Cynthia Jarrett, following a police raid on her home. Local youth took to the streets to protest the attack and were met by massive police repression. Fierce street-fighting left a police officer dead. The three youth were amongst 369 people later arrested in dawn raids by armed police.

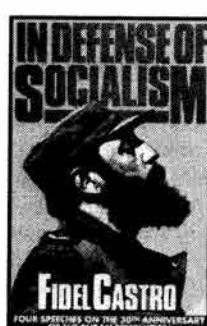
The three were subsequently convicted solely on the basis of statements allegedly given by them to the police.

The Families Campaign has won broad support in exposing the frame-ups, and won a new victory last June, when results of forensic tests were released showing the police transcript of their interrogation of Winston Silcott was a crude forgery, written after the actual interrogation. But, instead of releasing the three men, the government has ordered a new inquiry into Silcott's conviction.

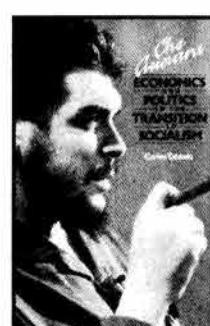
"The Justice March on October 5 is important because it will give an opportunity for residents of the area, as well as working people and youth from all over the country, to show support and demonstrate their conviction that the legal system itself is incapable of delivering justice," Waterman said. "We expect the government's new inquiry to be completed by the time of the march. We'll be on the streets, demanding 'Free the Tottenham 3!'"

The October 5 protest will assemble at 12:00 noon at Wood Green Civic Centre and march to a 2:00 p.m. rally at Finsbury Park. Speakers will include members of the three men's families, one of the recently freed Birmingham 6, and local Member of Parliament Bernie Grant.

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Steel companies threaten more layoffs

Tell employees to 'work harder'; seek union officials' aid for speedup

BY ELLEN HAYWOOD

GRANITE CITY, Illinois — The major U.S. steel companies are reporting losses of up to \$1 billion in the first half of 1991. The recession, especially the slump in the auto and construction industries, has lowered the market demand for steelmakers' most profitable commodities.

The average price of a ton of hot-rolled sheet steel has dropped from \$345 in early 1990 to \$280 in 1991. As a result the companies are threatening that if members of the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) do not accept speedup measures they will face wholesale plant closings.

National Steel, the fifth largest U.S. steel producer, took a "\$101 million loss in the first six months, the worst from an operating standpoint in our history," according to National Steel president Ronald H. Doerr. "A rising debt-to-capitalization ratio will soon restrict ability to borrow more funds," said Doerr.

The National Steel president's remarks were made to a union-company "Joint Leadership Meeting" in Detroit August 21. "Bluntly, we are on a collision course with bankruptcy," said Doerr. Steelworkers must "work harder . . . or face the very real possibility of not working at all," he warned.

Doerr's remarks were printed in a "Capsule Summary" and distributed widely at National Steel's three divisions: Granite City, Illinois; Great Lakes Division near Detroit; and Midwest Division near Chicago. A videotape of Doerr's speech, along with comments by district and local union officials at the meeting, was shown to union members during work hours.

Ten years ago a combination of the 1981-82 recession and growing international competition devastated the profits of the U.S. steel industry. In response, the steel companies carried out sweeping plant closings and modernizations that slashed employment by 58 percent. These measures reduced U.S. steelmakers' "man-hours-per-ton" below that of their capitalist

competitors in Germany and Japan.

Wages of the remaining steelworkers were cut during the early 1980s and only "restored" to 1982 levels at most major companies in 1989. Cost-of-living allowances were suspended and then dropped altogether. The single Basic Steel Contract covering all unionized steelworkers was broken up into separate 'pattern' agreements.

"Cooperative Partnership" programs were put into each contract. In these pacts the union locals adopted "flexibility" agreements aimed at making their company the "lowest cost producer."

With the added help of government-implemented protectionist measures, U.S. steel companies now control 80 percent of the domestic market. The companies turned a tidy profit during the economic upturn in the late 1980s, and boasted they would continue to do so even during a recession by reducing capacity to 60 or 65 percent.

When the current recession hit, the steel companies curtailed their operations through shutdowns and layoffs. Current average capacity utilization stands at 70 percent. According to union officials, some 10,000 steelworkers have been laid off this year. USX closed down its Fairless Works steel operation and laid off 2,100 workers. Of the 1,000 LTV laid off earlier this year, 400 have yet to be recalled.

At National Steel the union agreed to job combinations and reductions through "attrition" in return for language saying workers with more than a year on the job would not be put out on the street. According to National Steel's Doerr, "Headcount has been reduced by 800." "Headcount" is the bosses' euphemism for the wage laborers they employ. All workers with less than a year have been laid off and told they will not be recalled. Their jobs are being left vacant or done by those remaining working overtime.

After its first quarter losses in 1991, National Steel announced tentative plans to shut down the cold mill and sell off several departments at its Granite City Division.

With the second quarter losses mounting and recovery from the recession projected as slow at best, steel companies are calling for an even "leaner" industry. Doerr initiated the current campaign at the Joint Leadership Meeting, warning that the company must "break even in the second half of 1991 or face the possibility of filing for bankruptcy."

The company and union must work together, he said, to "eliminate jobs that aren't really needed, have operators perform some maintenance work," and "lower our headcount, overtime, and man-hours per ton so that we are more competitive in the marketplace."

"If we can't do that, the only choice left is to cut into our muscle and bone . . . our job security, our pay, and our benefits," he said.

The losses in the steel industry's profits are the inevitable result of the workings of the capitalist market economy with its declining rate of profit, increased competition, and recessions. The response of the companies is to reduce labor costs through layoffs

and cuts in wages and benefits as was carried out in the 1980s.

No union officials, however, are putting forward any perspective to unite workers in a common struggle to defend the union from another round of brutal company attacks.

United Steelworkers of America District 34 covers Granite City. District director Buddy Dowis said of the industry's downturn, "We've been asked to help, and the union's response is we want to cooperate."

Harry Lester, USWA District 29 director, took a similar position. "We," he said in the videotape of the Joint Leadership Meeting, have to have "a viable company to have a viable union. . . . We are going to have to work our heads off to make the company profitable."

Company and union officials are together gearing up the joint labor-management committees to increase their search for ways to "cut costs," that is, step up the intensity of labor and weaken the union another notch.

Ellen Haywood works at National Steel's Granite City Division and is a member of United Steelworkers of America Local 16.

New Comintern book's rare photos and drawings are a 'gold mine'

BY MICHAEL BAUMANN

A picture can indeed be worth a thousand words.

A total of 32 pages of photos and sketches are a high point of Pathfinder's two-volume edition of *Workers of the World and Oppressed Peoples, Unite!*, containing proceedings and documents of the Second Congress of the Communist International (Comintern).

"The photos and drawings of working people who came together for the congress in Moscow in the summer of 1920 broaden our understanding of this congress and of the movement that organized it," explains Robert Dees. "We turned up a political gold mine."

Dees worked on editorial preparation of the book and tracked down the illustrations. He is currently a textile worker in North Carolina.

Many of the photographs illustrate activities through which the working people of Russia participated in the congress: demonstrations, delegates' visits to factories, sports events, mass theatrical presentations. They also show us two of the *subbotniks* (Red Saturdays), through which working people in Russia — and some congress delegates, as well — mobilized in voluntary labor to rebuild their country.

"The striking youthfulness of so many of the faces, including the leaders of the Bolshevik Party, shows the decisive role of a new, young revolutionary generation at the gathering," Dees added.

The new volumes are the fourth installment in the series *The Communist International in Lenin's Time*.

The Second Congress, which was attended by delegates from 37 countries, was decisive in setting the political course of the new Communist International.

"Assembling the photos and drawings of the Second Comintern Congress was as big

a job as gathering all the pieces of the text for the book," Dees said.

"We collected illustrations from forgotten drawers in a village library in the Swiss Alps, from dusty tomes in major research libraries, from photo collections scattered in several countries, and from Pathfinder's own collection." Some of the drawings, especially those by Russian artist Isaac Brodsky, "are even better than the photographs," Dees said. "Look at the one of John Reed and you can see how worn he was, which the photographs don't really show."

The drawings, the work of five leading Russian artists who attended the congress, were printed in a special album, only one copy of which came to light in Pathfinder's research. The new Pathfinder book will make a broad selection of these drawings available for the first time in 70 years.

The new volumes are scheduled for publication November 1. *Militant* readers who place their order before that date can take advantage of the special prepublication offer of \$50 for the set (\$45 to members of the Pathfinder Readers Club). The price after November 1 is \$60.

California judge says farm workers must pay \$2.4 million strike fine

BY BRUCE VALDE

LOS ANGELES — The United Farm Workers union is faced with the prospect of paying a \$2.4 million fine before it can appeal a court decision awarding that amount to Carl Maggio, a major California lettuce grower.

The fine had been imposed on the union for damages assertedly inflicted on the grower during a 1979 strike in the Imperial Valley. During the strike, one unionist was killed and others wounded by company gunfire.

The strikers reportedly fought back with sticks, slingshots, and similar "weapons."

In 1985, Imperial County Judge William Lehnhardt held the union liable for \$1.7 million in damages. With accumulated interest, the fine now amounts to \$2.4 million.

Last May, the California Supreme Court let the fine stand, refusing to hear the union's appeal. Judge Lehnhardt then ruled that the \$2.4 million must be paid before any further appeal can be made.

A United Farm Workers' spokesperson indicated that the ruling by Lehnhardt will be challenged and that the union is hopeful that it can be overturned. Meanwhile, preparing for a worst-case scenario, the union is now seeking to raise the \$2.4 million.

Lehnhardt is well known for his hostility to the union and support for the growers. According to the union the judge's wife and son helped bring in the crop by working as scabs during the 1979 strike.



PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

RICH STUART

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders who have made central contributions to the forward march of humanity against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Malcolm X books in South Africa! Phambili Books in Johannesburg reports that it has had nonstop sales of Pathfinder's Malcolm X titles since receiving a large order of Pathfinder books by ship in July. By the end of August many of these books had been sold. Among the bestsellers were *Malcolm X: The Last Speeches* and the pamphlet version of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, which sold out in a week.

As soon as the Pathfinder shipment arrived from the United States, Phambili sent out a mailing to 250 of their customers alerting them to the new books' arrival. Along with titles by Malcolm X, sales have included Pathfinder books by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, Leon Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Maurice Bishop, and Thomas Sankara.

Included in the Pathfinder shipment were two sample posters distributed by the Friends of the Pathfinder Mural. The posters are of the portraits of Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela painted on the mural in Manhattan. The bookstore hung the posters on the wall and received so many requests from customers for copies that the store placed an order for 50 posters and 100 postcards of the portraits. Along with the order for posters and postcards came a new order for books to restock the store to keep up with the growing demand.

The rising demand for books by Malcolm X is not limited to South Africa. "The X Factor" is the headline in a July 15 *U.S. News and World Report* article on the "renaissance" of Malcolm X. The mass-circulation weekly mentions that "Pathfinder Press in New York reports a fivefold increase in sales of his books since 1988. *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* sold 14,000 copies in the first three months of 1991."

Newsweek magazine's August 26 issue features a two-page article entitled "The Battle for Malcolm X," focusing on a dispute between filmmaker Spike Lee and playwright Amiri Baraka over Lee's upcoming movie about the life of Malcolm X. The *Newsweek* article also describes the booming interest in Malcolm X. "In the past three years, sales of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* have increased 300 percent, and four of his books published by Pathfinder Press have seen a ninefold increase in sales between 1986 and 1991" notes *Newsweek*. Pathfinder has made a special offer of 50 percent off Pathfinder's Malcolm X titles to members of the production crew working on Lee's movie.

Confirming the jump in interest in Malcolm X, a staffer at the F.W. Woolworth's store in downtown Newark, New Jersey, told Pathfinder that sales of books by Malcolm X have gone well since the store put copies of the Pathfinder books in its display window.

The Pathfinder bookstores in Sheffield, England, and Greensboro, North Carolina, have moved to new locations. The grand opening of the new Greensboro bookstore is scheduled for September 15. For more information check the directory on page 12.



John Reed, drawn by Isaac Brodsky



El Salvador rebels call for reform of army and police

Salvador Samayoa, a leader of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), said in an interview in Managua, Nicaragua, that his organization was ready to take steps towards "not existing as an armed force" if the government of El Salvador would agree to five proposals for changes in the national army and police.

Since the spring of 1990 the FMLN has participated in U.N.-sponsored talks with the Alfredo Cristiani government of El Salvador and is pressing for a negotiated solution to the civil war in that country. The FMLN is made up of five guerrilla organizations that have fought to overthrow the U.S.-backed regime since 1980.

The proposals outlined by Samayoa include direct participation of former guerrillas in the army and police; "purification" of the armed forces to remove men with a history of repression; inclusion in the military and police of people of "diverse political views," and reduction in the size of the army.

Salvadoran president Alfredo Cristiani said in an August 23 interview that inclusion of FMLN members in the national armed forces is the main stumbling block to a peace accord.

Further talks are scheduled in New York, September 16-17.

General strike, protests threaten Madagascar regime

A three-month-long general strike has paralyzed Madagascar. Demonstrations and rallies demanding the resignation of the autocratic regime of the country's president — former navy officer Didier Ratsiraka — have occurred on a daily basis. Ratsiraka has been in power since 1975.

The strike and protest rallies, which began in early June, are being led by the Active Forces coalition, which includes 16 political parties representing forces from Christian churches to former Maoists.

Opposition forces are demanding a new constitution, elections, and an end to the concentration of wealth in Ratsiraka's hands. Madagascar exports mainly food, tobacco products, and minerals.

Madagascar, a former French colony until 1960, is an island nation 250 miles off the southeastern coast of Africa.

Workers and others stepped up their protests August 10 after the presidential guard fired on a demonstration killing 31 people and wounding hundreds. The army and police have not enforced a 9:00 p.m. curfew or other measures included in the state of emergency declared July 23.

Government, rightist coalition in Cambodia end talks without accord

The Cambodian government and a rightist coalition of rebel groups ended three days of negotiations in Bangkok, Thailand, on August 29 without signing an accord.

The two sides agreed to reduce their military forces by 70 percent but negotiations stalled over other issues, such as the electoral system to be used after the signing of a treaty.

The U.S.-backed anti-government coalition has waged a 12-year war of attrition in the impoverished country. These forces include the followers of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, former monarch of the country, the rightist Khmer People's National Liberation Front, and the Khmer Rouge.

The Khmer Rouge ruled the country from 1975-79 with a reign of terror under the leadership of Pol Pot. The regime he led was responsible for the deaths of more than a million people.

The current government came to power in 1979 after opponents of Pol Pot, with the aid of tens of thousands of Vietnamese troops, ousted the Khmer Rouge.

UN cites disastrous conditions in Africa

Five years after the United Nations announced an aid plan for African countries, UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar says Africa is worse off than ever. Africa's foreign debt has risen to \$270 billion.

"Social conditions worsened considerably, with deterioration in the areas of education, health, nutrition, employment and incomes, with especially serious effects on children, youth and women," Pérez de Cuellar said in a report released August 28.

Officials end Canada postal strike

Continued from front page

5,000-strong local here voted not to rotate, staying out the full 13 days.

Postal workers have been working without a contract since Aug. 1, 1989. One of the union's central demands is the conversion of a portion of the part-time and casual jobs into nearly 3,000 full-time positions. It is also demanding an end to contracting out and harassment, restoration and expansion of postal services, wage increases of 19 percent over four years, and a 17-cent cost-of-living adjustment.

Over the two weeks of strike action, fierce battles erupted in several cities, involving up to 800 workers defending picket lines against police and company goon attacks. The strikers faced repeated threats of back-to-work legislation by the federal government. Court injunctions against the union included a complete ban on all CUPW pickets in Toronto after the first week of the strike. Some 42 strikers have been fired and several arrested since August 24.

The workers' resistance severely hampered Canada Post's capacity to move the mail, get management and scabs into postal centers, and run a parallel network of pickup centers across the country. The day the strike actions were called off, CUPW members were on strike at 469 postal centers across the country — the largest number since the walkout began.

CUPW officials had suspended strike activity August 31 for three days. It was necessary to "cool things off a little bit," said Parrot, in order to conduct negotiations with the company.

Strike actions were resumed September 3 after CUPW officials rejected a new offer made by Canada Post. As more locals went out during the week, the strike grew to include some 25,000 unionists. Later that day Federal Labour Minister Marcel Danis announced that he would name a mediator in the conflict.

On September 4, Canada's top labor officials held a press conference in Toronto billed as a "show of solidarity" to back CUPW.

Shirley Carr, president of the more than 2-million-member Canadian Labour Congress, said that if Canada Post and the federal government "want a street fight, they'll get a street fight" because the Canadian labor movement was firmly behind the postal workers.

Leo Gerard, national director of the United Steelworkers of America, added that if Canada Post obtained injunctions banning postal workers from picketing, the rest of the labor movement would picket post office property on their behalf. Despite these declarations, the labor officials made no serious effort during the strike to organize solidarity with the embattled postal workers.

Gold was appointed the day after the CLC news conference.

Federal workers strike

The decision by the CUPW officialdom to

Socialist branches in 4 cities close, move reinforces party nationally

BY GREG McCARTAN

Four branches of the Socialist Workers Party have announced they are closing in order to strengthen a number of other branches and allow for renewal of the staffs of Pathfinder, the *Militant*, and the party's national office.

The four are branches in Phoenix, Arizona; Austin, Minnesota; Price, Utah; and Charles-ton, West Virginia.

Public announcements by leaders of each branch received local press coverage in several cities.

The Price Sun Advocate noted that SWP candidates for city council Tony Dutrow and Sherrie Love had withdrawn from the race.

"For more than a decade the Socialist Workers Party has been privileged to work with members of the United Mine Workers and other trade unionists, workers, and farmers in Carbon and Emery counties," Dutrow is quoted in the *Sun* as saying.

"It was the struggle of union coal miners in the late 1970s and early 1980s that first brought the Socialist Workers Party to this area. The interest of working people in the *Militant* newspaper that was exhibited on the picket lines and in the union halls continues



Striking postal workers on the picket line in Toronto, Canada.

Militant

suspend the strike action came on the eve of a walkout by some 100,000 of the 155,000 members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). This is the first such strike in the union's history. CUPW and PSAC had earlier signed an agreement to back one another's strikes.

Some 155,000 PSAC members are without a contract. About 50,000 of them, designated "essential" workers by the government, are forbidden to strike, a policy accepted by union officials.

PSAC members are fighting the Canadian government's wage controls, measures also imposed by most provincial governments in Canada. Ottawa is demanding a three-year contract from PSAC that does not grant a wage increase the first year and limits increases to 3 percent over the next two years. The union is also fighting layoffs, contracting out, and the growing use of workers on "temporary"

short-term contracts.

On September 9 PSAC members set up picket lines across Canada.

Airport maintenance workers and support staff considerably slowed down air traffic at Pearson International Airport in Toronto, Canada's busiest air transportation hub. The ports of Vancouver and Halifax were crippled as well, and picket lines were thrown up in front of government buildings in cities across the country.

In Halifax strikers blocked downtown streets, causing massive traffic jams.

In downtown Montréal hundreds of pickets with signs reading, "Services yes, wage freeze no!" blocked the entrances to large federal buildings as riot police gathered to help strikebreakers enter.

Ottawa has threatened to enact a back-to-work law if the strike successfully shuts down government operation.

Demonstrators protest police and racist violence in Canada

Continued from Page 16

The report called for self-government for Native people in Canada and a parallel justice system run completely by Native people where Natives make their own laws and enforce them. Manitoba Justice Minister James McCrae has tried to dampen expectations by claiming that the judges' recommendations are just the opinion of "two individuals."

There have also been recent antiracist demonstrations in the wake of several police attacks against Blacks.

Montréal protests

In Montréal, 200 demonstrators came out August 24 to the latest in a series of demon-

strations protesting the killing of Marcelus François by Montréal police officer Michel Tremblay July 3. The Montréal city government and Québec's Liberal provincial government have tried to justify and cover up the murder.

Police claim the shooting was an accident — the result of mistaken identity in pursuing robbery suspects. When the actual suspects eventually surrendered, they bore no resemblance to François. François was unarmed.

Most protesting groups are demanding an independent civilian inquiry. Some are demanding the cop be charged with murder. On July 24, Québec Justice Minister Gil Rémillard declared that no charges will be laid. A coroner's inquest was announced for September but this was rejected as a whitewash by Dan Phillip, head of the Black Coalition of Québec and Sylvia Clarke, François' widow.

The August 24 demonstration was attended by both French- and English-speaking Blacks, Québécois, gay rights activists, a contingent of Mohawks, and other working people.

Dudley Laws of the Toronto Black Action Defense Committee told the rally, "No police officer in Canada has ever been convicted for killing someone. It's a disgrace. Police in Canada are racists and murderers. We have a responsibility to defend ourselves."

This rally, and an earlier one on July 26 which drew more than 600 people, were organized by a group of young people called AKAX, which stands for Also Known As X. Speakers at the July 26 rally included Ariel Duley of AKAX, Laws, and Ellen Gabriel, a leader of the Mohawk Indians at Kanesatake, near Oka, Québec.

Antiracist fighters also built a large demonstration in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on August 1 in response to a July 19 police attack on young Blacks who were protesting racist discrimination by Halifax night club owners.

More than 1,000 people, just over half of them Black, marched past some of the clubs and rallied at St. Mary's University. The march swelled in size as it marched along, with many whites joining along the way or applauding from the side. It was the largest action against racist police violence in Nova Scotia in many years.

Socialist candidates in Newark protest cop threats

BY CINDY JAQUITH

NEWARK.—The Socialist Workers Party candidates for state office in New Jersey are protesting a police provocation against supporters at a campaign table set up in downtown Newark.

On August 26, supporters set up their regular Saturday literature table on the sidewalk outside the campaign offices. The table offered the *Militant* newspaper, which carried an article on the candidates' denunciation of recent police brutality in northern New Jersey and featured the fight against the ultrarightist assault on abortion rights in Wichita, Kansas. Also on the table were books and pamphlets by Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, and Fidel Castro, and buttons opposing police violence.

At 1:30 p.m., a cop on horseback approached the table and asked, "What kind of books are those? Are you communists?" As he sought to start a debate, a campaign supporter asked him to move since his horse was blocking access to the literature table and the campaign headquarters entrance.

Several minutes later the same cop returned with another officer on horseback. They were soon joined by a third cop on foot. For more than half an hour the three stayed there, seeking to intimidate passersby from approaching the literature table or entering the headquarters, despite the repeated objections of campaign workers.

One cop provocatively suggested, "If we got a crowd around and could show people what these people really stand for, I bet that table would be turned over." He also asked if the socialists had a permit for the table.

One of the mounted cops asked, "Do you think Commander [his horse] could make it up those stairs?" He was referring to the stairway leading to the campaign offices, which are located on the second floor.

With the police threats escalating, the campaign workers took down the table.

The socialists' attorney, Bill Volonte of the American Civil Liberties Union, stated that the cops' behavior amounted to "threatening mob action" against a legal election campaign. The socialists collected more than 1,000 signatures on nominating petitions to appear on the November ballot. They are running for seats in the State Senate and State Assembly.

A campaign statement was released by SWP candidates Rachel Knapik, a pharmaceutical worker and member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union; Karen Kopperud, a rail worker and United Transportation Union member; and Jason Redrup, chairperson of the Newark Young Socialist Alliance.

They pointed out that the cops' action "is a blatant violation of the Bill of Rights guarantee of free speech and a threat to the right of all working people who seek to present their views to the public — from trade unionists on picket lines, to activists defending access to abortion clinics, to protesters against police brutality."

The candidates declared, "We will not be intimidated. We will continue to actively campaign in Newark, including in the downtown area. We will not accept this attempt to deny working people and youth the right to read the *Militant*, to study the speeches of Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela, to learn about the Cuban revolution. We will continue to campaign against police brutality — from Los Angeles to Newark — just as we will speak out for a countermobilization to answer ultrarightist assaults like those in Wichita."

The candidates urged all supporters of democratic rights to lodge protests with Newark Mayor Sharpe James, City Hall, Newark, New Jersey, urging him to instruct the Newark police "to immediately cease and desist from this harassment." Copies should be sent to the Socialist Workers 1991 Campaign, 141 Halsey St., Second Floor, Newark, New Jersey 07102.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

The Militant Labor Forum is a weekly free-speech meeting for workers, farmers, youth, and others. All those seeking to advance the fight against injustice and exploitation should attend and participate in these discussions on issues of importance to working people.

At the Militant Labor Forum you can express your opinion, listen to the views of fellow fighters, and exchange ideas on how to best advance the interests of workers and farmers the world over.

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Soviet Workers' Victory: A Defeat for Capitalism and an Advance for Workers Worldwide. Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor, member United Mine Workers of America Local 2368. Sun., Sept. 15, 5:30 p.m. 111 21st St. S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (205) 323-3079.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Continuing Fight against Cop Brutality. A speak-out. Panelists: Juan Villagómez, Young Socialist Alliance; Eli Green, Socialist Workers Party; others. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 2546 W Pico Blvd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

FLORIDA

Miami

Stop the Attacks on Jitney Drivers and Passengers. Jitney Drivers Speak Out. Panel discussion. Sat., Sept. 14. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: Dinner, \$3.50; program, \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

Employer/Government Attacks on Job Safety. Lessons of the North Carolina Poultry Plant Fire. Panel discussion with unionists. Sat., Sept. 21. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 137 NE 54th St. Donation: Dinner, \$3.50; program, \$3. Tel: (305) 756-1020.

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Victory in the Soviet Union. Workers Seize Opening as Stalinist Regime's Crisis Deepens. Speaker: Bob Anderson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

The Economic and Political Crisis in the Soviet Union: What Road Forward for Working People? Speaker: Rick Young, Young Socialist Alliance. Sat., Sept. 14, 7 p.m. 545 W Roosevelt Rd. Donation: \$3. Tel: (312) 829-6815 or 829-7018.

MARYLAND

Baltimore

Battle in Wichita: Women's Rights and the Working Class vs. the Right Wing and the Government. Panel Discussion. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

Defend Immigrant Workers' Rights; For a World Without Borders! Panel Discussion. Speaker: Bob Miller, member United Food and Commercial Workers, meat-packer fighting against firing by Esskay smokehouse for de-

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Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, and *L'internationaliste*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 111 21st St. South. Zip: 35233. Tel: (205) 323-3079, 328-3314.

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 2546 W. Pico Blvd. Zip: 90006. Tel: (213) 380-9460. **San Francisco:** 3284 23rd St. Zip: 94110. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

CONNECTICUT: New Haven: Mailing address: P.O. Box 16751, Baybrook Station, West Haven. Zip: 06516.

FLORIDA: Miami: 137 NE 54th St. Zip: 33137. Tel: (305) 756-1020. **Tallahassee:** P.O. Box 20715. Zip: 32316. Tel: (904) 877-9338.

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 172 Trinity Ave. Zip: 30303. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 545 W. Roosevelt Rd. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 829-6815, 829-7018.

IOWA: Des Moines: 2105 Forest Ave. Zip: 50311. Tel: (515) 246-8249.

KENTUCKY: Louisville: P.O. Box 4103. Zip: 40204-4103.

MARYLAND: Baltimore: 2913 Greenmount Ave. Zip: 21218. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 605 Massachusetts Ave. Zip: 02118. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

fending rights of immigrant workers. Sat., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. 2913 Greenmount Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (301) 235-0013.

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston

What's Behind the Crisis in the Soviet Union? Speaker: David Ferguson, Socialist Workers Party, member Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union Local 1. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 605 Massachusetts Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

MICHIGAN

Detroit

The Defeat of the Coup in the USSR. Victory by the Soviet Workers. Speaker: Representative Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 14, 8 p.m. 5019 1/2 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$3. Tel: (313) 831-1177.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Cuito Cuanavale. Cuba's Role in Defeating the South African Invasion of Angola. Video. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 141 Halsey St., 2nd floor. Donation: \$3. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Social Explosion in Crown Heights. Speaker: Derek Bracey, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council from District 33 in Brooklyn, member Young Socialist Alliance National Committee. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 191 7th Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (212) 727-8421.

NORTH CAROLINA

Greensboro

Grand Opening Pathfinder Bookstore. Sat., Sept. 14. Open House: Noon to 7:30 p.m. Program: 7:30 p.m. **Prospects for Socialism Today.** Speaker: Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor. 2000-C South Elm-Eugene St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (919) 272-5996.

OHIO

Cleveland

Right-Wing Assault in Wichita: The Stakes for Working People. Panel Discussion. Speakers: Terry Halfacre, president Cleveland chapter National Organization for Women; Jane Reilly, Catholics for Choice; Paco Sánchez, Socialist Workers Party. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Sept. 15, 7 p.m. 1863 W 25th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

Defeat of Coup in USSR: Victory by Soviet Workers. Speaker: Peter Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. 1863 W 25th St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (216) 861-6150.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Defeat of Coup in USSR: Victory by Soviet Workers. Speaker: George Buchanan, *Militant* staff writer. Translation to Spanish. Sun., Sept. 15, 4 p.m. 1906 South St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (215) 546-8218.

UTAH

Salt Lake City

The Fight for Freedom in South Africa: ANC Congress Discusses Coming Struggles. Speaker: Bill Arth, Socialist Workers Party.

member Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers union. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 147 E 900 S. Donation: \$3. Tel: (801) 355-1124.

WEST VIRGINIA

Morgantown

Right-Wing Assault in Wichita: The Fight for Democratic Rights Today. Eyewitness Report from Wichita. Speakers to be announced. Sat., Sept. 21, 7:30 p.m. 242 Walnut Street. Donation: \$3. Tel: (304) 296-0055.

BRITAIN

London

National Liberation, Stalinism, and Communism: African National Congress Fighters Face the Coming Struggles. Speaker: Rich Palser, Communist League. Sat., Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. 47 The Cut, SE 1. Donation: £1. Tel: 71-928-7993.

Manchester

Mark Curtis, Victim of Frame-Up: Next Stage in the Fight for Justice. Speaker: Representative Manchester Supporters of Mark Curtis Defense Committee. Fri., Sept. 20, 7:30 p.m. Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Donation: £1. Tel: 061-839 1766.

Sheffield

Racist Attacks and Police Brutality: The Stakes for Working People. Speaker: participant in Telford protest against cop killing of Ian Gordon. Fri., Sept. 13, 7:30 p.m. 1 Gower Street, Spital Hill. Donation: £1. Tel: 0742-765070.

Meat-packers fight for union rights

Continued from Page 2

which have caused them to sign union cards.

A worker from Laos who has been in the United States for five years, working at NBP for three of them, said he was "one hundred percent for the union. The conditions are too bad, the line too fast," he said.

Another worker said both he and his wife had been injured on the job. When their doctor told them they could go back to work with restrictions, the company fired both. Although able to collect workmen's compensation and unemployment for awhile, their benefits have run out. The other packing-houses on the circuit will not hire them because of their injuries, he explained. "I sure hope they get a union in that plant," he said. "It's the only way."

Of the scores of workers talked to, few were not supporters of the union. One woman said that she had worked in a union plant in Dodge City and "it wasn't much different." A young worker said his brother worked in a union meat-packing plant in California and says, "Unions just take your money."

More common was the belief that, as one worker put it "the union's coming in, no way it won't. Conditions here are just too bad. I worked in a union plant in Oklahoma and I know the difference."

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 19 Terry St., Surry Hills, Sydney NSW 2010. Tel: 02-281-3297.

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 71-401 2293.

Manchester: Unit 4, 60 Shudehill. Postal code: M4 4AA. Tel: 061-839 1766.

Sheffield: 1 Gower St., Spital Hall. Postal code: S47HA. Tel: 0742-765070.

CANADA

Montréal: 6566, boul. St-Laurent. Postal code: H2S 3C6. Tel: (514) 273-2503.

Toronto: 410 Adelaide St. W., Suite 400. Postal code: M5V 1S8. Tel: (416) 861-1399.

Vancouver: 1053 Kingsway, Suite 102. Postal code: V5V 3C7. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

ICELAND

Reykjavík: Klapparstig 26. Mailing address: P. Box 233, 121 Reykjavík. Tel: (91) 17513.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 157a Symonds St. Postal Address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 793-075.

Christchurch: 593a Colombo St. (upstairs). Postal address: P.O. Box 22-530. Tel: (3) 656-055.

—THE GREAT SOCIETY—

Liberation, Part II — "Military assault rifles, pistols and other weapons confiscated by U.S. troops



Harry
Ring

during the 1989 invasion of Panama will be returned to help Panama's poorly armed police force, officials said." — News item.

The new Nicaragua — In Managua, where potable water and electricity are as scarce as jobs, a

new cathedral is being erected for Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo who was the top point man for the U.S. sponsored contra war. The church is being mainly paid for by Thomas Monaghan, right-wing owner of Domino's Pizza chain. Responding to angry critics of the esthetic quality, and propriety, of the project, the mayor of Managua declared, "The decisions are made by those who pay the bills."

Recession, what recession? — In July, 318,000 people exhausted their unemployment benefits and were unable to qualify for extensions. It was the greatest such number since they began keeping records on it in 1951.

Another free-market blessing

— To cut operating costs on Radio Free Europe, Washington may have the station start beaming commercials to its East European audience.

Institutional ads — Washington would also like to pare operating costs for TV Marti, which aims counterrevolutionary propaganda at Cuba. But the U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba would make it difficult to sell commercial time. One possibility might be public-service plugs for the CIA.

Why the cynicism? — Resisting the demand to reduce oil spills by building double-hull tankers, some operators suggest loading single-

hull ships only to the water line so that the oil is equal to the water pressure. Noting that shipowners could cheat by loading their vessels higher regulators indicate they favor safety methods not dependent on owners' honesty.

Progress report? — "Happy to Be Me," a new rival to the Barbie doll has a thicker waste and broader hips than Barbie, plus shorter legs and bigger feet. Wrote one former Barbie owner: "Barbie . . . was an unrealistic image to live up to. So I like the idea of someone who's more real looking, with big feet."

Moistburger — In Phoenix,

George Juan Kuehme, a cook, will do 45 days for a misdemeanor assault on a cop. When he saw a patrol car at the drive-in window, Kuehme assertedly spat on the burger he was flipping and declared, "That's what an officer gets." The cop claimed he noted something amiss when he bit into it.

Low pain tolerance — Last May, Los Angeles school superintendent William Anton declared he would "share the pain" of a slashed school budget by reducing his \$161,390 annual wage by 10 percent. Now it's disclosed he has yet to do so. Explained the crestfallen super, "It's unfortunate . . . it was something I overlooked."

Los Angeles cops' computer talk shows violence

LOS ANGELES — An insight into the mentality of cops was provided with the publication of a sampling of the computer messages exchanged between patrol cars of the Los Angeles Police Department.

Some 700 messages, stored in a police headquarters computer terminal, were selected for publication by the Christopher Commission which was created in the wake of the police beating of Rodney King.

The messages provide graphic evidence of the ugly racism, sexism and hatred of gays that prevails among cops. This aspect of the messages was quite widely publicized by the media.

But the messages also illuminate another fact about cops — their thirst for violence. This aspect of the transcripts has received far less coverage in the big business press.

It is the function of the police to intimidate and brutalize working people. Those recruited to the force either start out with the necessary capacity for such violence, or soon develop it. Their role as cops, coupled with their capacity for violence, make them prime candidates for the kind of fascist forces that will emerge in the time to come.

Here we present some of the messages

made public by the Christopher Commission. The commission did not identify those sending the messages back and forth. Here, where there is both a message and a response, we simply cite them as "Cop A" and "Cop B." Obvious errors in spelling and punctuation have been corrected.

Message No. 20

Cop A: "Ahhh, a nice night for a killing"
Cop B: "They give me a stick, they give me a gun, they pay me 50s to have some fun."

No. 29

Cop A: "Find an 89 Ford Probe . . . blk . . . with two cholos."

Cop B: "If I find it it'll be ois [officer involved in shooting] time. God, I wanna kill something oh so bad."

No. 51

"I almost got me a Mexican last night but he dropped the damn gun too quick. . . ."

No. 112

Cop A: "Ray, tell me what's happened [name omitted] would like to know."

Cop B: "His suspect expired . . . big time. . . . 5 shotgun rounds, 5 9mm rounds to the head . . . his blood flowed

warm and steady on the sidewalk."

No. 119

"Death and destruction puts a roof over my head, food in my belly and a new car under my fanny. A day without violence is like a day without sunshine."

No. 156

Cop A: "Hey a shotgun party. . . ."
Cop B: "Yes. Bys — bring your own shotgun — party favors included, like moving suspects."

No. 259

Cop A: "We R hungry . . . we got a little physical w/a [name omitted] on Columbus. . . . It was fun . . . we had to teach him a little respect . . . for the police . . . hahahaha. . . . We had fun."

No. 284

Cop A: "I enjoyed that . . . torture and sadism can be sssuuuuuccchhhhhh a rush . . . hahahahahahahahahahaha."

Cop B: "But it must be done tastefully of course. . . ."

Cop A: "I was informing [name omitted] of the standard procedure for dealing with such subhuman maggots in Central. Ah, the good old days. . . ."

No. 294

Cop A: "Ripped apart two parked cars, tore down a chain link fence, slapped around a dozen kids, but other than that I sat here patiently. . . ."

Cop B: "And I bet U did it all with gusto!! HaHa!! Now U don't have to go home and beat the dog. U have gotten all your aggressions out!!"

No. 295

"The moon is full and so is my gun, gonna go 187 somebody and have some fun. They

give me a stick, they give me a gun, they pay me \$50Gs to kill someone. Raaaa."

No. 317

Cop A: "We're looking for someone to beat up and I hope we find them soon."

Cop B: "You missed the pursuit. The suspect needed to be beat up."

No. 304

"Yeah though I walk through the valley of death and evildoers I shall fear no evil for I carry a 9mm and a big stick, along with a sharp knife and a flashlight, essential tools in wiping out this plague of evildoers."

No. 668

Cop A: "What's up Gary. . . . What are you doing."

Cop B: "Alley sweeps. I'm sure you want no part of it."

Cop A: "Why not. I love alley sweeps, especially if they don't want to move . . . hammer time."

No. 487

"Hey Michele. . . . Foot pursuit. . . . We got him. . . . The dogs had dinner. . . . It was a great foot pursuit. I was the first officer there, chased him into some houses, K-9 got him from there. . . . Awesome."

No. 325

"Oh noooooooooooooo . . . we get to thump the janitors again. . . . Should be interesting . . . we got such good news coverage last time." (Last year, a peaceful protest march of unionized maintenance workers was attacked by club-swinging cops in riot gear. — Ed.)

No. 327

Cop A: "I sent U a bunch of messages earlier but I guess you were busy beating up janitors."

Cop B: "Yes I just got one."

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interests of the Working People

September 19, 1966

Price 10c

By Evelyn Reed

Margaret Sanger, world-renowned pioneer advocate of the basic human right of birth control, died Sept. 6 on the eve of her 83rd birthday. For more than half a century, this woman conducted a struggle for all other women against a colossal combine of Established Reaction which chained them to ignorance, fears and superstitions.

Today "family planning" is regarded as thoroughly respectable, the only civilized way to deal with reproduction in human, not animal, terms. To clear the way for accepting this concept, Margaret Sanger had to endure unremitting persecution by legal authorities and the church, including criminal indictments, a jail term, organized raids on her birth-control clinics and police attacks on her meetings. In 1914, she was made liable to a prison term of 45 years under the Comstock law for the "suppression of vice." Her "crime" was sending birth-control information through the mail!

Until after the First World War, Margaret Sanger stood virtually alone except for a small band of progressive women, some of them Socialists. In the course of time, this originator of the phrase "birth control" ac-

quired a growing corps of supporters and defenders of her cause. By 1937, even the hidebound American Medical Association recognized birth control as part of legitimate medical practice.

THE MILITANT

Official Weekly Organ of the Socialist Workers Party

September 20, 1941

In the course of a discussion held in Mexico on April 4, 1939, Leon Trotsky said, "Fascism in the United States will be directed against the Jews and the Negroes, but against the Negroes particularly, and in a most terrible manner. A 'privileged' condition will be created for the American white workers on the back of the Negroes."

The anti-labor bureaucratic caste in the army is not only teaching hundreds of thousands of white young men to hate organized labor and to receive and carry out orders given "from above" without thought and without question, but it is also teaching them — by separating Negro soldiers from them everywhere they eat, sleep, train, drill, get recreation, etc. — that they are better than Negroes.

Not every white soldier accepts these ideas, of course. Those especially who have been in unions, worked alongside of Negroes and walked beside them on picket-lines, refuse to accept these ideas.



Restaurant workers at UN are fighting bosses' use of scab labor against strike.

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEW YORK — "We want a union" is how Domingo Gómez summed up his views while walking the picket line outside the United Nations August 20.

Gómez is one of 87 workers employed by Restaurant Associates, the contractor that operates the dining facilities at the United Nations. The workers had submitted a petition demanding recognition of Local 100 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union. They went on strike June 18 because the company refused to recognize the union. The Restaurant Associates immediately replaced the strikers with scabs.

Three days later the workers voted to return to work and to file for an election with the National Labor Relations Board. They took this step on the condition that all strikers be allowed to return to their jobs. What the

workers discovered was that the scabs remained on the job and only some of the strikers returned to work. The remaining strikers are maintaining the picket lines charging Restaurant Associates with a lockout.

The mostly immigrant workers, many from the Dominican Republic and Bangladesh, have faced substandard wages, no benefits, and unsafe conditions. Eliseo Hernández, who has worked at the UN food service for just over three years, said workers "have no benefits, starting pay is \$5.32 an hour, and we have no job security. There is no concern for safety. We work with dangerous chemicals and have no protection, not even gloves. That's why we want a union."

The United Nations Staff Union, which represents the nearly 6,000 employees at the UN's New York headquarters, has called for a boycott of the restaurants and cafeterias.

Blow to postal workers' fight

The September 5 decision by the National Executive Board of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) to call off the strike against Canada Post is a blow to the 46,000 members fighting to defend their union, their living conditions, and their rights.

Moreover, the decision came at the moment when some 100,000 members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) were preparing their first national strike against the Canadian government. Rather than mobilizing the combined power of these two struggles, the CUPW officials dealt a setback to both, which will make the PSAC members more vulnerable to the threat of back-to-work legislation by the federal government.

During the walkout the postal workers demonstrated their fighting capacities and willingness to stand up to the company's use of scabs, government injunctions, and threats of back-to-work orders.

They won broad solidarity for their struggle from working people across Canada. They thwarted Canada Post's attempts to paint the strikers as greedy and selfish workers whose strike victimizes those who receive their unemployment, welfare, and social-security checks in the mail.

But the CUPW officials' actions aimed to sap this fighting determination of the membership. They did everything in their power to block bringing the full power of the union to bear in the strike. They organized a "rotating strike," a tactic widely debated by many workers on the picket lines and one that gutted the union's ability to set up strong picket lines capable of shutting down the entire postal system. A week into the strike, while the strikers were gaining some momentum, the officials made a first attempt to bring all workers back to work to "cool things off a little bit."

The rotating strikes also served to give credence to the government's claim that postal workers were disrupting an "essential service." Rather than shutting the system down and politically taking on the government rationale, the CUPW officials instead showed how "responsible" they were.

This is the same framework they advanced in saying the union should avoid back-to-work legislation and seek mediation instead. But government laws declaring strikes "illegal" aren't worth the paper they are written on if the labor movement stands up and fights.

The way in which the officials conducted the postal workers' strike and their ordering of the unionists back to work highlights how the actions today of the labor tops — in both Canada and the United States — are much more in

response to pressure from the bosses and their government than from the ranks of the unions.

In the face of the employers' deepening offensive against the unions, the top officialdom of the labor movement pleads with and begs the government and the bosses not to cut so deeply into their dues base. This is the real content of the actions they take — from organizing Solidarity Day '91 on Labor Day weekend in Washington D.C., to the strike by the postal workers in Canada.

In the case of the postal workers, the CUPW officials sought a way to get the company to back off a bit without waging a real fight. Thus they welcomed the appointment of a mediator by the government. They justified calling off the strike on the basis of Chief Justice Alan Gold's "proven record as a mediator."

Statements by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) tops who said unions would engage in "a street fight" in defense of the postal workers was pure demagogic. As with other tough-talking statements by officials pledging solidarity, the pledge merely presaged the sellout. Despite their tough talk, the CLC did nothing to build solidarity with the embattled postal workers.

As with the union officialdom as a whole, that of the CUPW tries to convince workers that they have common interests with the bosses and their government. During the negotiations around trade agreements with the United States and later with Mexico, they joined in the chauvinist campaign to defend "our" bosses, "our" companies, "our" economy, and "our" country, against workers of the United States and Mexico.

But the ruling rich will not back off from their offensive against labor. No matter how much the labor officials plead for a return to "good labor-management relations" the employers will continue to chip away at wages, seek to weaken or break unions, and deepen their assault on the rights and standard of living of the entire working class.

Only by charting an independent political course, one that relies on the mobilized power of the entire working class, can the unions be transformed into the fighting instruments that are needed today.

Backing the federal workers strike and demanding the government end its wage-control demands is an immediate step that can be taken today. Whether in manufacturing, mining, transport, or another industry, working people have an interest in pushing back the government's attack on labor. If Ottawa is successful it will embolden all the employers to demand similar wage restrictions.

Send us letters for upcoming 'Militant' column

BY GREG McCARTAN

In the coming weeks we will initiate a new column in this space. It will be a forum to discuss political questions readers run into on the job, at meetings, or in social protest actions. In addition it will take up points in *Militant* articles that readers disagree with or want more clarification on.

The new column will depend on letters from our readers. We ask everyone to begin contributing letters to the *Militant* to help get this column under way.

Over the past months worker correspondents have increased their contributions to the paper on developments in the labor movement, protest actions in the cities where they live, and fights to defend democratic rights.

This has helped make the *Militant* more of a paper that

LEARNING ABOUT SOCIALISM

reflects advances and setbacks in the resistance of working people and youth to the offensive by the ruling rich against our standard of living, organizations, and rights.

We are working to take further steps along these lines in order to bring readers timely articles on important political debates, discussions, and developments around the world and especially in the United States.

At the heart of forging a leadership capable of advancing the interests of working people is seeing and acting on all political developments from the point of view of a class — the working class. Every individual who wants to fight to change the obvious ills bred by capitalism faces this question in an immediate way.

The employers, the government, and the big-business media all conspire against working people attaining class consciousness and charting a course of independent political action. They work overtime to blame the growing social ills and economic crisis not on the capitalist system, but on workers in other parts of the world, immigrants from semi-colonial countries, unemployed youth, imports, or a host of other diversions.

In this they have the aid of the union officialdom and other middle-class layers who bring their political perspectives directly into the labor movement and social protest actions.

Whether it is a question of how best to fight the employers' offensive, what steps to take in combating police brutality, what kind of countermobilizations are needed against rightist offensives in the streets, whether the unions need to break from the rulers' two-party system, or how to address the debate around "free trade" and protectionism, the middle-class misleaderships push their anti-working-class perspectives on youth and workers going into struggle.

Similar discussions arise in connection with big developments in world politics. The crisis of the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union, what the Cuban revolution stands for, and the road forward in the struggle against apartheid are all topics of discussion and debate in the mines and factories and on college and high school campuses.

Class conflicts will sharpen as the world capitalist economic crisis deepens. As working people enter into struggles to defend themselves against the effects of imperialist war and the employers' assaults, the fighting vanguard needs a class-struggle outlook and orientation. Many are interested in discussing why the fight for socialism is the historic line of march of the working class and the steps that can be taken today to move along that road.

Through the *Militant* subscription campaign currently under way, supporters of the paper are redoubling their efforts to participate in the broadest number of political activities, protest actions, strikes, and union struggles.

Readers participating in this circulation drive will want the *Militant* to address the questions they run into each week. In order to effectively discuss and argue a revolutionary working-class outlook and course of action, *Militant* readers need to discuss these topics in the pages of the paper.

Enlivening our letters page is one big step that can be taken along this course. Questions, disagreements, and suggestions have been raised on the letters page from time to time. We hope more readers will express their opinions in the future. We will do our best to use the new column to answer questions raised on the letters page.

We need to hear from you in order to write more extensive articles on the kind of political concerns readers want addressed to help them effectively participate in the many discussions going on today.

Letters can be on a range of topics and do not have to be long. If you have a question about a stand taken by the paper, let us know. Jot down the content of a political discussion on the job that you think needs to be addressed more fully in the paper. If you want clarification on a point raised in an article, drop us a note.

Getting this discussion going will be an aid to readers everywhere. Many of the political questions supporters run into in one city are not unique to that particular area. To help get the new column going as soon as possible write us at: The *Militant*, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Lessons of Wichita

Leaders of Operation Rescue and the thousands of right-wing cadre who responded to their call to join the assault on women's right to choose abortion have left Wichita, Kansas. The accomplishments of the rightists in Wichita should send a warning to the labor movement as well as all fighters for women's rights, civil rights, and democratic rights.

Since the siege began July 15, the ultrareactionaries showed their strength and ability to both mobilize broader forces and to garner support from state and local governments. They took a step toward intimidating women from exercising their right to choose abortion.

Operation Rescue drew in new forces from Wichita and the surrounding areas as the September 7 assault on the Wichita Women's Center indicates.

The growing class polarization in the United States and the fact that the years-long, bipartisan offensive against abortion rights has not been fought against are what gave Operation Rescue the opening to launch the assault. They initiated a vanguard action in Wichita, counting on the fact that no significant opposition would be mobilized to counter their efforts.

Just as the incipient fascist movement had banked on, the thousands from Wichita and across the country who are opposed to such right-wing actions were never organized to respond. Unions and organizations that defend democratic and women's rights, that could have potentially defeated the assault, were hamstrung by the political perspective of labor

and women's rights officials. These misleaders looked to the cops, the courts, and the voting booth to resolve the situation.

They proved incapable of answering the right-wing's lies on abortion or tearing off the veil of "Christianity" or "American values" worn by the rightists to cover their rightist political agenda. An explanation of why this assault on the clinics posed a threat to democratic rights and the labor movement was never given by these officials.

Far from being politically isolated and forced to retreat from Wichita, Operation Rescue made a timely decision to leave the city — one that puts them in a position to continue to carry out further attacks. In recent weeks President Bush and Kansas Governor Joan Finney distanced themselves from the assault. Recognizing these signals, the rightists simply decided to take their gains and wrap up their Wichita street offensive before this section of the ruling class had to come out more strongly against their assault.

New, similar offensives by ultrareactionaries should be answered immediately. Broad mobilizations of the labor movement and its allies must be organized and mobilized against them. The widespread sentiment against the rightists among working people and youth in Wichita and elsewhere shows the potential for such a course. This is the only road toward blocking the advances made by such rightist offensives and toward strengthening the labor movement.

North Carolina fire deaths

The September 3 fire at Imperial Food Products, in which 25 workers died and 49 were hospitalized, shows the extent to which the bosses will go to protect their profits. The facts about the prison-like conditions in the North Carolina plant show that the owner and supervisors chose money over the lives of their employees in every instance.

The big-business media is portraying the fire at Imperial Food Products as an aberration. Imperial's owners are presented as bosses who reject the "workers-are-our-most-important-asset" values that other capitalists are said to hold dear.

But this is a lie. The family that owns Imperial Food Products operates just as other capitalists do; they seek to raise their rate of profit by squeezing more out of workers, including by denying the most minimal safety rights.

Federal, state, and local governments were indifferent to

the illegal, life-threatening conditions that Imperial Food Products workers faced. Federal guidelines allow states to set a pace of inspections so low that it would take 50 years to visit all worksites. North Carolina inspectors visited so few worksites in 1990 that it would take more than 100 years to cover presently existing workplaces there. The government role aids all employers as they seek to minimize or eliminate safety measures won by workers over the last decades.

The challenge before the labor movement is to organize struggles that can advance the fight to defend the lives and health of the working class. This requires unions that end labor collaboration with big business and build independent labor organizations that can mobilize working people to fight for enforcement of safety measures at all workplaces. This is the way to move toward ending disasters like the one at Imperial Food Products.

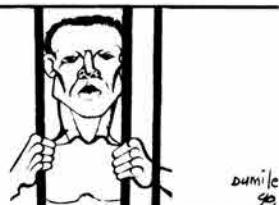
Who's at fault when prisoners die from heat?

BY MARK CURTIS

In early July three men held at a state prison in Vacaville, California, died. They succumbed to intense heat while in their cells, unprotected from the high temperatures of a local heat wave.

Jim O'Brien, the county coroner, said that the men's body temperatures were at least 108° Fahrenheit — nearly ten degrees above normal. Some will call this event a "tragedy." But these men did not die from "natural causes": responsibility for their deaths must be laid at the feet of the prison officials at Vacaville.

BEHIND PRISON WALLS



Dumile

The names of those who died have not even been reported in newspapers like the *Des Moines Register*, which carried a story on conditions at the prison.

Along with other inmates, the men were being held in cells that did not have ventilation or cooling adequate to sustain human life. These and other inmates had been given doses of psychiatric drugs to make them more "manageable." The drugs also raise body temperature, making anyone who takes them more susceptible to the heat.

Large numbers of mentally ill people in the United States are in prison today. Eight thousand inmates are held at the prison at Vacaville named the California Medical Facility. Some are held in cellblocks with names like "special needs." Others are in "general population" or in the "hole" or locked down for their behavior which is treated as a disciplinary problem that requires punishment.

Prison officials, the same breed everywhere, will of course claim that they did not realize such a dangerous situation existed and that they certainly are not responsible for what happened. But this time they will be hard pressed to get anyone to believe them.

One week before the deaths, a prisoner rights group filed a lawsuit in federal court attacking prison conditions. "What's going on is the prison system is degenerating into what can be described as a medieval mental asylum situation," said Donald Spector, director of the Prison Law Office, when he announced the lawsuit.

Whether this warning was placed in the bottom of the "in" basket, sent down the line through hundreds of "proper procedure" steps, or simply thrown in the nearest trash can we don't know. Still, there is one thing we can be sure of. The guards knew, the security directors knew, the treatment directors knew, and the warden knew it was too hot in the cellhouse. They knew that the men locked down were hot and miserable every summer night and day.

Workers behind bars across the country know what the inmates at Vacaville are going through this summer. Ft. Madison, where I was previously imprisoned, is located on the humid banks of the Mississippi River. Men live in two dorms of 70 each. When the nights get hot they toss and turn, not able to fall asleep until late at night. They wake up with sheets soaked in sweat. They squabble over the big fans, and try and save money to buy small fans of their own. They wait in long lines to get some ice and take cold showers to get a little bit of relief.

Not every prison is as bad as this, but some, like Vacaville, are much worse.

Two weeks earlier, the Supreme Court handed down a ruling making it harder for prisoners to sue over these inhuman conditions. The court ruled against Pearly Wilson, a prisoner who sued the Hocking Correctional Facility at Nelsonville, Ohio. Wilson began his court action after the prison ignored his letters complaining about overcrowding,

inadequate heating and cooling, filthy conditions, and the failure to segregate physically and mentally ill inmates from the general population.

Wilson's argument was that the conditions at the prison violated the Eighth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution which prohibits "cruel and unusual punishment."

The judges ruled that in order to win such a suit, one must prove "deliberate indifference" on the part of the prison officials. According to the ruling it is not enough to just show that things are bad, even horrendous. A plaintiff must prove the state of mind of prison officials responsible for the conditions that prisoners suffer.

Every summer working and poor people die on the job and in their homes from the heat. At the Swift meatpacking plant where I worked several men passed out from the heat and hard work during the summer. Foremen literally dragged them off the line and scrambled to get other men to take their place in order to keep the production line moving.

The *Des Moines Register* reported recently that two brothers from Elgin, Iowa, pled guilty to five counts of cruelty to animals. When sheep, rabbits, and other animals died on an Iowa farm this March, both men received one year of probation and a \$600 fine. It was not reported if the "state of mind" of the defendants had been determined. Meanwhile, the warden of the Vacaville prison has not been arrested or charged with breaking any "law" of the land.

The three men in Vacaville did not die from Mother Nature's summer heat. They died because under capitalism, their lives were valued far less than livestock or other forms of property.

Mark Curtis is serving a 25-year sentence after being framed up on charges of rape and burglary because of his union and political activity. He is currently incarcerated at the Iowa State Men's Reformatory at Anamosa.

LETTERS

Mining invasion

The so-called "resources boom" in Western Australia has resulted in a mining invasion on land inhabited by Aborigines for over 40,000 years. Aboriginal sacred sites are being destroyed, fenced, and cut up, and fishing holes and hunting grounds are being decimated. Aboriginal culture is being sacrificed to the golden calf of profit.

In 1980 mining companies drilled for oil at Noonkanbah Pastoral Station in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. As an organizer with the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union, I took part in the blockade trying to stop a convoy carrying an oil rig reaching Noonkanbah.

Since then companies operating in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions of Western Australia have taken great pains to avoid another confrontation, preferring negotiated settlements.

Conzinc Riotinto of Australia is developing a \$500 million iron ore project at Marandoo in the Pilbara. Dominion Mining is spending \$350 million on the Yakabindie nickel project.

Karijini Aborigines are attempting to negotiate employment at Marandoo when iron ore mining is eventually started. If they do not gain the right to employment, the state's taxpayers will be left with communities that will not have the benefits of resource development. A campaign of misrepresentation of the Aboriginal people is taking place in the daily press over their struggle to break free of this degrading position.

Intensified machinery in the Pilbara iron ore industry has resulted in a reduced work force producing

record tonnages.

Tough economic times are being used as an excuse to allow unfettered mining development in Western Australia.

*Denis Day
Goldsworthy, Western Australia*

Provocative and insightful

Although I do not wish to continue my subscription to your newspaper, I want to encourage you to continue with your provocative and insightful analysis of world events. I have enjoyed it tremendously.

I would like to suggest that you print more articles relating to the struggle of the Palestinians for an independent nation, especially now that the U.S. and U.S.S.R. are brokering a Middle East Peace Conference scheduled to begin in October.

*S.A.
Logan, Utah*

Corrupt system

I'm writing to thank you for sending your paper to me. I would also like to renew my subscription. Your paper is my only contact with the outside and I look forward for every issue. I find it very comforting that there are some people out there who see how corrupt this system is.

*A prisoner
Crescent City, California*

Fighting spirit

Keep the fighting spirit and keep sending political awareness to all freedom fighters incarcerated in the U.S.

Daryl Gates must be dethroned from the Los Angeles Police Department



ment. Brutality must cease in racist America. Right-thinking people have to gain knowledge of the workings of capitalism.

*Keep moving forward, Militant.
A prisoner
Crescent City, California*

Need facts on Cuba

I am writing to you in order to ask for a free subscription to the *Militant* newsweekly. Could you place me on your mailing list soon?

Another reason I would like to be placed on the list is mainly because I wish to know what is truly going on in Cuba. By me being in a konzentration kamp in the amerikkkan empire, my news is very inaccurate. So I ask of you to forward me some authentic news. Remain vigilant in the face of all forms of oppression.

*A prisoner
Crescent City, California*

Spellbound

Greetings to the *Militant*. Two months ago I was introduced to your weekly paper and I must say I've been spellbound by your straightforward information ever since. The fellow prisoner that introduced me to the *Militant* told me that your publication sends

free subscriptions. If that is still in effect I would appreciate a free subscription also.

*A prisoner
Napanoch, N.Y.*

[Editor's note: Due to the spreading word of the *Militant* among prisoners we have had to institute a special prisoner subscription rate of \$6 for six months, \$12 for one year. Because this rate does not cover the printing and postage costs we have asked our readers to increase the contributions to the *Militant* prisoner's fund. Please fill out the form below to insure as many prisoners as possible can receive the paper.]

Greed

The *Militant* has been very informative. It has taught me a great deal about oppression and the amount of greed that I thought didn't exist in today's world. I would like to renew and continue my education but I am without funds.

*A prisoner
Crescent City, California*

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Militant Prisoner Fund

Enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to help defray the costs of providing *Militant* subscriptions to prisoners.

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Company greed kills 25 workers in N. Carolina poultry plant fire

BY ROBERT DEES

HAMLET, North Carolina — "I saw a big light, like an explosion," Loretta Goodwin explained. "I ran to a door, but it was padlocked. People were panicked, pushing, trying to get out. I was pushed down in a hole. Every time I tried to get up, I was knocked down again. I was suffocating from the smoke. At night, I still hear people screaming to get out."

When she did manage to escape, Goodwin said, "I was coughing and choking up black balls. Then they hauled out my best friend, but she was dead."

Goodwin worked in the packing department at Imperial Food Products here, a plant that made chicken nuggets and other chicken products for grocery stores and restaurants. Hamlet is a town of 6,300 people.

Of the 90 workers on first shift September 3, 25 died of smoke inhalation from the fire and 49 were hospitalized, some in critical condition. Six rescue workers were also hospitalized.

The blaze started at the 26-foot-long deep-fat fryer located in the center of the plant. There had been problems with the fryer that morning, including, Goodwin said, allegations of a gas leak. Plant manager Brad Roe had ordered the fryer fired up and operating while repairs on a hydraulic line were being done. The open flame from the natural gas-

fueled fryer ignited hydraulic fluid vapor. Soaring flames ignited ceiling insulation, creating thick, toxic smoke that cut visibility to zero. The plant had no sprinkler or fire alarm systems.

Several of the doors in the plant were locked when the fire broke out. Aquanetta Fairley's fiancé, Jeff Webb, was one of those killed. "The doors were padlocked," she said. "The company claimed people were stealing boxes of chicken. If you had to take a bag of trash out, you had to get a supervisor with a key to open the door. Sometimes when I went up there, every door except the main door was locked, and sometimes it was too."

"The supervisors would be across the street," Fairley said, "which is where they were that morning."

Susan Malachi worked in the plant two and a half years before quitting a year ago. Her sister Gloria was working that morning, and is now in the hospital. "They didn't really have any safety conditions," Susan Malachi reported. "All the lights went out three times while I worked there. Then you'd have to feel your way out, because when the lights went out, it was jet dark. There were no signs saying 'emergency exit,'" Malachi said. One woman reported that the fryer had caught fire three times in the three months she had worked there.

The plant had not been inspected for safety

in its entire 11 years of operation, despite the fact that the plant was closed for several months in 1983 by a serious fire, also in the fryer area. The plant was repeatedly cited for unsanitary waste disposal in recent years.

Federal, county, and city authorities are all claiming they have no responsibility for any failure to inspect Imperial. Federal minimum standards call for state inspectors to randomly check only 2 percent of workplaces. In 1990, North Carolina safety inspectors checked less than 1 percent of the total. The state has 28 workplace safety inspectors — including 12 in training — to police 180,000 work sites. U.S. Department of Agriculture food inspectors, who check the plant each day, never reported any of the safety violation, despite state and federal laws requiring them to do so.

Last year the Democratic Party-controlled state legislature further crippled safety inspection and enforcement by returning nearly half a million dollars in OSHA funds to the federal government.

Malachi described the conditions in the plant. "I quit because I got pneumonia twice" from working there. "In the wintertime it's really cold, and in the summertime it's hot," she said.

In a separate discussion in the Fairley home, Leroy Hubbard told of a similar experience. "I worked there two and a half

weeks, and I got pneumonia. The doctor told me to stay home for nine days. When I went back they said, 'You don't get sick on this job. You come in sick.'" Hubbard was then fired.

"This happened to a lot of people," Malachi reported. "They wanted you to have perfect attendance. If you stayed out because you were sick, or for the kids, they'd fire you."

Eighteen of the dead were young women, mostly single parents.

Starting pay was \$4.85 an hour, Goodwin explained. It took a year to work up to the top rate of \$5.50 an hour. The workers had not received a raise in six years. "They used to pay our insurance until last January," Goodwin said. "Then we had to pay our own. They took \$12.45 out of my check every week. Just for me! To cover my son would have cost \$58 a week."

Fairley pointed out that the company was pushing to increase production. The number of chickens a friend of hers was expected to process increased 65 percent in the last month and a half.

"We worked hard up there," Malachi said. "Black and white, we all worked together." But "the top dogs were getting all the money," Goodwin noted. "Brad [Roe] was very racial," she said. "When I went in in the mornings, I would say hello, and he would just look at me like I was a fool."

Other workers also described management's attempts to divide the workforce through use of racist practices in pay and job assignments. Some believe the conditions in the plant were tolerated by authorities because most of the workers were Black.

"They didn't care about the people," Malachi explained. "They just cared about getting the product out."

Dot Bennett, who worked in the plant nine years before quitting in protest against discrimination, was more blunt: "They treated us like animals."

Socialist candidate says fire result of 'greed and criminal indifference'

GREENSBORO, North Carolina — Naomi Craine, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Greensboro, said the deaths and injuries from the fire at Imperial Food Products in Hamlet were the result of "greed and criminal indifference" on the part of company and government officials.

"In this case, as is true across the country, the bosses are steadily driving down our wages, benefits, and working conditions, taking more and more of the wealth we produce while refusing to use it to ensure safe working conditions," Craine, a textile worker, said.

"Meanwhile, the government is spending increasing amounts on cops and the military to police working people at home and to wage murderous assaults on our fellow toilers abroad," the candidate said. "This same government claims it has no money to enforce safe working conditions."

"This is one example of why the labor movement must chart an independent political course, relying on its own organized strength to defend and advance the interests of working people," she said. "Only by breaking from supporting the two parties of big business and from the framework of 'helping' to make 'our' companies profitable can the potential power of the unions be drawn upon."

Craine said her campaign demanded the criminal prosecution of Imperial Food management responsible for the conditions that led to the deaths and injuries of workers at the plant.

—R.D.



August 24 march against police violence included Blacks, Québécois, and a contingent of Mohawks. Sign in French says, "Life has no skin color."

Systematic discrimination

The inquiry report says Native people face systematic discrimination from police, courts, prosecutors, and penal institutions. Native people are 12 percent of Manitoba's population but 50 percent of its prison inmates.

In the case of the killing of J.J. Harper, the inquiry, led by Associate Chief Justice A.C. Hamilton and Associate Chief Judge Murray Sinclair, found that racism was a central factor. Cross was looking for a car theft suspect and Cross "stopped the first aboriginal person he saw, even though that person was a poor match for the description . . . and a suspect had already been caught."

While they did not try to reconstruct exactly how Harper was killed — Cross

claimed Harper tried to take his gun — the two judges said the follow-up police investigation was done "merely to corroborate and reinforce" Cross' story, that police "collaborated in preparing their notes," and were "less than truthful in their testimony."

They condemned the conduct of Winnipeg Police Chief Herbert Stephen for condoning racist behavior by the police force.

In the case of Osborne's murder, the judges found at least a dozen instances where racism came into play, including the fact that the initial Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) investigators rounded up and ques-

tioned only Native youths. Yet they say that RCMP racism was not directly responsible for the 16-year delay, but rather racial segregation and racist assumptions by white residents of The Pas.

The judges made no recommendations for sanctions or disciplinary proceedings against the police officers concerned. However, the Manitoba government had the report for 18 days prior to its public release. A few days before its release, Police Chief Stephen announced his retirement, effective early next year.

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